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MAY 1965

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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Vṛshavahana — Pallavaneśvaram.

COURTESY : *Department of Archaeology, Madras State.*

(For details of description see article on "Tiruvenkadu and Pallavanesvaram" appearing on page 84.)

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

गौडाचार्या निर्विकल्पे समाधावन्ययोगिनाम् । साकारब्रह्मनिष्ठानामत्यन्तं भयमूचिरे ॥ २८ ॥

Gauḍācāryāḥ, Gauḍapāda; *nirvikalpé*, in the *nirvikalpa*; *samādhau*, *samādhi*; *sākārabrahma-niṣṭhānāṁ*, devoted to *Saguṇa* Brahman; *anya*, other; *yogināṁ*, yogis; *atyantaṁ*, terrible; *bhayaṁ*, fear; *ūciré*, declared.

28. Gauḍapāda declared that the other yogis, who are devoted to Saguṇa Brahman, are terribly afraid of the Nirvikalpa Samādhi.*

* For this Nirvikalpa Samadhi is a state where one's individuality is completely merged in the Cosmic Consciousness. So, ordinary *sādhakas* who are always in the realm of subject-object consciousness are afraid of such a state, where they can see nothing, hear nothing, know nothing.

NOTE: The next verse is a quotation from the *Māṇḍūkya Kārika* of Gauḍapāda, where the passage above referred to occurs.

अस्पर्शयोगो नामैष दुर्दर्शस्सर्वयोगिभिः । योगिनो बिभ्यति ह्यस्मादभये भयदर्शिनः ॥ २९ ॥

Asparśayogaḥ, yoga which is not in touch with anything; *nāma*, termed; *eśaḥ*, this; *sarvayogibhiḥ*, by all yogis; *durdarśaḥ*, difficult to attain; *hi*, because; *yoginaḥ*, the yogis; *abhayé*, in the fearless; *bhayadarśinaḥ*, perceiving fear; *bibhyati*, are afraid.

29. This Yoga which is termed "not in touch with anything" is difficult to attain by all yogis. Because the yogis are afraid of it perceiving fear in the fearless.*

* It is fearless, because attaining it one breaks the bonds of *samsāra*, becomes liberated for ever.

भगवत्पूज्यपादाश्च शुष्कतर्कपटूनमून् । आहुर्माध्यमिकान्भ्रान्तानचिन्त्येऽस्मिन् सदात्मनि ॥ ३० ॥

Bhagavatpūjyapādāsca, Śri Śankarācārya also; *acintye*, in the imponderable; *asmin*, in this; *sadātmani*, Brahman, which is of the nature of Existence; *śūṣka-tarkapatūn*, people devoted to dry logic; *amūn*, these; *mādhyamikān*, a sect of the Buddhists (the nihilists); *bhrāntān*, deluded; *āhuḥ*, said.

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30. Śri Śankarācārya also says that the Nihilists, devoted to dry logic, are deluded while thinking about this imponderable Existence, Brahman.

अनादृत्य श्रुतिं मौर्ख्यादिमे बौद्धास्तमस्विनः। आपेदिरे निरात्मत्वमनुमानैकचक्षुषः ॥ ३१ ॥

Tamasvinaḥ, Ignorant ; *imé*, these ; *bauddhāḥ*, the Nihilists ; *maurkhyāt*, due to ill-comprehension ; *śrutiṁ*, the scriptural texts ; *anādṛtya*, disregarding ; *anumānaikacakṣuṣaḥ*, making deductive logic alone as their eye (of comprehension); *nirātmatvaṁ*, nihilism ; *apediré*, reached.

31. These Nihilists, ignorant (of the Truth) due to ill-comprehension, disregarding the scriptural texts and making deductive logic alone as their comprehending eye reached their theory of Nihilism.

शून्यमासीदितिब्रूषे सद्योगं वा सदात्मताम्। शून्यस्य न तु तद्युक्तमुभयं व्याहतत्वतः ॥ ३२ ॥

Śūnyaṁ, Non-existence ; *āsīditi*, existed ; *brūṣe*, you say ; *śūnyasya*, of the non-existence ; *sadyogaṁ*, conjunction with existence ; *vā*, or ; *sadātmatāṁ*, the nature of existence. *Tat tu*, But that ; *vyāhatatvataḥ*, because of self-contradictoriness ; *na*, is not ; *yuktaṁ*, proper.

32. You say, 'Non-existence alone existed'.[1] Now do you propose that non-existence was in conjunction with existence or was in the form of existence. Either way it can not be properly proposed because it would be a self-contradictory statement.[2]

[1] "Some said, *Asadevedamagra āsīt*", says the Upaniṣad and then questions how that can be? *Asat* means non-Existence; how then can non-existence exist?

[2] What is the relation between non-existence and existence when you say that non-existence existed? Is the relation that of conjunction (*saṁyoga*) as between two objects like pot and cloth or that of *identity* (*tādātmya*) like that between a substance and its quality? As there is no form for non-existence this relation of conjunction between existence and non-existence is not possible because there cannot be *any* relation between a thing existing and void. Therefore the relation of identity also is not possible. So the sentence "non-existence existed" is without meaning — that is what is conveyed by this verse.

न युक्तस्तमसा सूर्यो नापि चासौ तमोमयः। सच्छून्ययोर्विरोधित्वाच्छून्यमासीत्कथं वद ॥ ३३॥

Sūryaḥ, the sun ; *tamasā*, with darkness ; *yuktaḥ*, is in conjunction ; *na*, not ; *asau*, this (sun); *tamomayaścāpi*, of the nature of darkness ; *na*, is not ; *sat-śūnyayoḥ*, between existence and non-existence ; *virodhitvāt*, due to contradictoriness ; *śūnyaṁ*, non-existence ; *kathaṁ*, how ; *āsīt*, existed ; *vada*, tell.

33. You cannot say either that the sun is in conjunction with darkness, or that the sun is of the nature of darkness (darkness and sun being of contradictory natures). Tell us then how you posit that "non-existence existed", when existence and non-existence are of opposite natures?*

* Just as light and darkness cannot be said to be in conjunction, even so there cannot be conjunction of non-existence and existence. In short non-existence (or void) cannot be — this is the purport. There is a beautiful Sanskrit verse to illustrate this :

मृगतृष्णांभसि स्नातः ख पुष्प कृत शेकरः। एष वन्ध्या सुतो याति शशशृङ्ग धनुर्धरः ॥

"Having bathed in the waters of the mirage, decorated well by the sky flowers (grown in the sky) there goes this son of a barren woman holding the bow made of the horns of a hare." As everything mentioned in this verse is impossible so also existence of non-existence is a thing that can never be.

(*Continued on page* 24)

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APPROACH TO GOD

THERE is a conception that unless there is awe and fear and the concomitant feelings of submission and servitude, God cannot be approached or worshipped. While it is a fact that this attitude may be one of the approaches to God, it does not necessarily follow that it is the only approach. An everyday and every man's experience in the world should throw some light upon this statement. Whom do we remember most? Those whom we fear or love? Who does command our submission, non-acquisitioned and spontaneous, earliest; one who tyrannizes or one who loves? The only answer can be those whom we love. In fear the burden of submission is irksome, always, and is a compulsion that is sought to be overthrown the moment the subject feels himself strong enough to do so, or to flout it. But in affection, in love, man does not feel it though it may weigh down upon him. There is no groaning under its weight; there is not even the grumbling. Rather, there is a spontaneous joy in such submission. In worship or approach to God also this same rule is applicable. In fact man's feelings, being what they are, cannot be multiplied in number; no fresh type of faculties can be created but they can be extended, expanded, sublimated. And that is what happens in our approach to God. You are not asked to be bereft of your feelings or create new ones but only to turn them Godwards.

Now, what infuses awe or fear into us? Is it not the immensity of the powers or glory of God? And also a feeling of alienation from Him when we do not consider Him as our own? 'It is those who love glory themselves that think much about the glory of God,' says Sri Ramakrishna. Why should we be overwhelmed with His glory? Perhaps, there is a desire for worldly things and glory lurking in ourselves that makes us do so. Perhaps, we want to bargain with Him for some of His glory. This does not, however, mean that one should not appreciate a beautiful scenery or a serene and soul-elevating place or circumstance. But to think of His glory and forget Him is not an aspirant's way. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'What will you gain by counting the trees and branches and leaves in a mango grove? You have come to eat mangoes. Eat them and be happy'. What will it avail us if we come to know what all are the powers of God? And is it possible to know all? On the other hand, if we realize God, see Him, talk with Him that will liberate us, make us free. And this freedom is not something like that what we see in the world, momentary and conditioned. It is eternal and unconditioned. It makes us soar beyond the plane of mundane consciousness. It enwraps us in a divine and eternal light, makes us free from fear, free from inhibitions, free of likes and dislikes, free from attachment and hatred. Is not such a state covetable? Worship of God helps us reach this state. Nothing else can.

There is a Sanskrit verse by the poet Bhartṛhari which runs thus: 'In enjoyment there is the fear of disease; in social position, the fear of falling off; in wealth, the fear of kings; in honour, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of the foes; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, the fear of antagonists; in virtue, the fear of calumniators; in body, the fear of death. All things of this world pertaining to man are attended with fear; renunciation alone stands for fearlessness.'[1] We may add that when this renunciation leads to God-realization it opens the flood-gates of bliss eternal leaving no room for the baser motives and fear to assert themselves. That is why one who has touched the source of Truth, of Light wavers not in his path;

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[1] भोगे रोगभयं कुले च्युतिभयं वित्ते नृपालाद्भयं
माने दैन्यभयं बले रिपुभयं रूपे जराया भयम् ।
शास्त्रे वादिभयं गुणे खलभयं काये कृतान्ताद्भयं
सर्वं वस्तु भयान्वितं भुवि नृणां वैराग्यमेवाभयम् ॥

Vairagyasatakam—31.

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fears nothing. He stands like the adamantine rocks which though battered by the waves remain unmoved, undented. Tribulations and trials, miseries and afflictions leave him unperturbed. When we realize God we know Him to be our own, the Soul of our souls, our inmost Being. Can we then call it servitude or submission in the sense we understand worldly servitude? To whom do we submit? Is it not to our own inner Being? Could there be any harm in that? What is more welcome than that we conquer our baser impulses, the turbulent passions, and the still stronger ego and submitting to the Indwelling spirit be at peace with ourself and the whole world? And if worship of God does it, as assured by God-men and men of God, why should we stand away?

All the objections to worship of God seem to arise from the conception that He is an extra-cosmic Being, sitting somewhere in the Heaven, high above the clouds, demanding implicit submission under threats of dire consequences, holding out bouquets and enjoyments to those who follow His commands and punishment of hell fire to those who transgress. But the Hindu view of God — that He is the Indwelling Spirit of every being and at the same time transcends them all — is a very encouraging one. Here the distance between the soul and the Oversoul shrinks, as it were, to an appreciable extent. The strangeness, man at first feels towards God, drops off yielding place to a feeling of appurtenance, belonging. The sages and saints experienced this; the Upaniṣads declare it: The *Chāndogya*, for instance, points out 'that Puruṣa which is seen in the eye that is the Ātman'.[2]

Bādarāyaṇa in his Śārīrika Sūtras removes the apparent ambiguity about the meaning of this passage — whether it refers to the Jīva or the Paramātman — by two aphorisms: 'The one within (is the paramatman); on account of His qualities being declared.'[3] A second passage which refers to the "within" occurs in the same Upaniṣad (I. vi. 6) wherein the description of that Being, in the orb of the sun, is given.[4] An objection was raised that this description cannot pertain to the Paramātman — He being without form — and therefore must only be of the *jīva*, or the deity representing the sun. This contention is, however, refuted. The highest Lord though without form assumes forms to bestow grace on the *sādhaka* by His own power, Māyā.[5] Why does this become necessary? It is well known that all individuals have not the same capacity of comprehension. Our sages to knew it. So, for such of those who cannot or do not like to think in terms of the formless aspect of God, the forms and qualities are declared.

Any further doubt lingering in one's mind is removed by the next aphorism: 'And there is another one (i.e. the Paramatman who is different from the individual soul animating the sun etc.); on account of the distinction being declared.'[6] Where is the distinction proclaimed? The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* gives the answer. It is not the deity representing the sun that is meant while referring to the One inside its orb but the 'One who dwells in the sun, but within it, whom the sun does not know, whose body is the sun, and who controls the sun from within, that One is the Internal Ruler, your own immortal Self'.[7]

Śruti is never tired of repeating its statements to drive home the truths. It repeats this formula in the case of all elements, all beings, all limbs of man, and his mind and his knowledge. Here we see how close we are to God and yet we know Him not, comprehend Him not. Sri Ramakrishna used

[2] य एषोऽक्षिणि पुरुषो दृश्यत एष आत्मा ।
Chandogya Upanisad VIII. vii. 4.

[3] अन्तस्तद्धर्मोपदेशात् । *Brahma Sutras* I. i. 20.

[4] य एषोऽन्तरादित्ये हिरण्मयः पुरुषो दृश्यते
हिरण्यश्मश्रुर्हिरण्यकेश आप्रणखात्सर्व एव सुवर्णः ।
Chandogya, I. vi.

[5] माया ह्येषा मया सृष्टा यन्मां पश्यसि नारद ।
सर्वभूतगुणैर्युक्तं मैवं मां ज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥
Quoted by Sri Samkara in his commentary on *Br. Sutra Bhashya*, I. i.

[6] भेदव्यपदेशाच्चान्यः ॥ *Br. Sutras*, I. i. 21.

[7] य आदित्ये तिष्ठन्नादित्यादन्तरः, यमादित्यो न वेद यस्यादित्यः शरीरम्, य आदित्यमन्तरो यमयति, एष त आत्मान्तर्याम्यमृतः ॥ *Br. Up.* 3. 7. 9.

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give the simile of the musk-deer. The deer would smell the fragrance of the musk but not knowing that the source of the fragrance was in its own navel, would run to all quarters of the forest and at last when tired would lie down and then come to know that what it has been seeking outside in vain was all the time within itself.

Now a question would arise: 'If we are controlled by a higher power residing in us, in what way are we responsible for our actions?' Such a question was put to Sri Ramakrishna also. And that question will be repeated for ages to come, by people who would want to shift the responsibility of their wicked deeds on to someone else. Actually, they do not believe it when they repeat that it is the Indwelling Spirit who is working through them. It is only a veil to hoodwink others. In the heart of their hearts they know that they are far far away from believing it themselves. They assert their ego most of the time. 'Well', you may say, 'yours is a strange logic indeed! You breathe hot and cold at the same time. Once you say that every thing is controlled by the Inner Ruler and again you say that the ego asserts. Then, what type of a ruler is that who cannot resist the force of the ego?' To this we reply, 'True, it seems very incompatible. But haven't you seen a mother, with her benevolence and beneficence, though guiding the steps and conduct of her child, giving way to its unreasonable importunities? Aye, she even sometimes allows the child to burn its fingers in fire though she could, if she would, prevent it in the interest of the child. But then she would take care of it again as soon as it has done with its play, learnt its lessons. For all that, can you insist that the mother was not strong enough to restrain the child? No. Likewise the Inner Ruler (*antaryāmin*) is not a despot. You are given a little free play to use your faculties, to pick your own way, learn your lessons yourselves in the world, when you would not listen to the sane advice that is pouring forth from your own Inner Being. He even allows you the freedom to deny Him. But there it ends, your ego comes into clash with those of others if you will assert it too much. Then you fall back for support on God, on your Inner Being. Where then is the inconsistency in what we have said?' This much about those who would say that they have their free will.

A little digression here is inevitable as the subject of free will has been introduced. Is our will free? The answer is yes and no. We can approach this reply from two standpoints. First of all, as related already, a certain amount of freedom is given to us, just as a cow tethered to a post is allowed to roam about, in a meadow, to the extent the length of the rope round its neck allows it, but no more. We can feel this even in society. Society gives us freedom to develop in our own individual way, of course, subject to certain restrictions. And when we go beyond the set bounds, down comes its mighty arm. The long arm of the law seizes one who transgresses its limits, or enters into others' domains. However much we may like to break these bonds they would not yield, but only chafe us the more. We are not in any way in a dissimilar position as far as 'will to act' is concerned. So many factors press us down: our inherent tendencies, circumstances, environments and the like.

From the second point of view, as long as our will remains distinct from the Cosmic Will it is not free, but when the former runs in concurrence with the latter it has no more bonds. Whatever it wills comes true, for it can have no desire apart from that of the Cosmic Will. Of course, this latter state is possible only when man has attained complete perfection, when not a speck of worldly taint is left in him.

To return to the subject of submission: what about those who simulate submission accepting the existence of a Higher Entity ruling over us? It is a dangerous game they try to play. They are deceiving themselves. Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the Brahmin — who killed a cow and who while taking credit for the lay out of his garden and every good and beautiful thing he possessed, imputed the sin of cow-killing to Indra, the presiding deity of the hand — should serve as a very poignant eye-opener. Another example Sri Ramakrishna used to cite was that of Duryodhana. Duryodhana

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said to Sri Krishna: 'I know what is righteousness but I have no inclination to practise it, and I know what is unrighteousness but I have no disposition to avoid it. O Krishna, I act as you, dwelling in my heart, make me act.'[8] Sri Ramakrishna says that such lip service won't do us any good: 'You know in your heart of hearts that those are mere words. No sooner do you commit an evil deed than you feel a palpitation in your heart.' Again he said, be one in your thought, word and deed. For sincerity is the *sine qua non* of spiritual life. A man with a sincere trust in God does not come to grief. 'If you place your trust in a great man he won't let you down. What then to speak of the Lord!' remarks Sri Ramakrishna.

Having said that awe and fear, submission and servitude need not be the only approach to God it devolves on us to point out what other approaches are feasible. We shall leave out the Vedantic idea of 'Atman is Brahman', as it is not a practicable proposition in the case of all and sundry. Worship implies three things, the worshipper, the worshipped and the act of worship. Let us recall what we said earlier, viz. that God assumes forms for bestowing grace on the aspirant. Everything will be easier to comprehend if we remember this. Now, to God with form, the other forms of approach would be respect, reverence and love. The last one is an intimate relation. We are not devoid of these feelings. We respect and revere those who are good and great, who possess virtues in abundance, and who are pure. Man loves his father, mother, wife, and children. The approach of the Vaiṣnavas is somewhat on this line, and can be followed with profit. There are no conventionalities to be observed, no restrictions to be feared in man's approach to these relations. Man feels one with them. That is the reason why man turns to his home after a hard day's labour or a nerve-racking experience, for rest and sympathy. He is sure of the soothing touch of the beloved ones there. It restores him to cheerfulness, gives him courage to face life again, however terrible a form it may assume.

But very rarely do people come across disinterested love in the word. It is all give and take, a shop-keeping, that is why there is so much of unrest in families. Perhaps, man's love towards God begins that way. He will worship God to get some of his desires fulfilled. In other words, his devotion is *sakāma*. If, however, the aspirant uses his discrimination he will soon understand the emptiness of the enjoyments. Love of God rightly directed is able to generate in us dispassion for these enjoyments. That is the test of the dawn of real love of God. Nothing tempts a man, who has that love, to fall from the ideal. It is love of God for His own sake, not for the sake of 'loaves and fishes'.

Man is obsessed with the idea that every thing should be judged by his own standard. He wants to weigh God also in his own moral balance. This shows how anthropomorphic an ordinary man's idea of God is. Nay, even great theologians and scholars commit this mistake. They superimpose their own imperfections, disabilities and drawbacks, on the Lord, and posit that such a being does not deserve any worship. But a little thought would satisfy that it is puerile to speak of good and evil in the transcendent. We will bring down the transcendent Lord to the level of man, if we try to impose on Him our standards, of morals and the like. Morals and laws are necessary in a world of multiplicity where there is a conflict between interests. But God is one who has no axe of His own to grind, who has no pleasures to seek and is on a plane where there is no multiplicity, no interests to clash. He is ever pure, ever perfect, ever knowing, and ever free. He desires nothing, wills nothing. If such a Being does not deserve worship who else will? Man, wherever he finds greater powers, greater talents and greater virtues instinctively bows down his head in salutation. Then why should he be arrogant towards the highest Being, who is the fulfilment of all virtues and power and glory?

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[8] जानामि धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः
जानाम्यधर्मं न च मे निवृत्तिः।
त्वया हृषीकेश हृदिस्थितेन
यथानियुक्तोऽस्मि तथा करोमि॥

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LEVELS OF REALIZATION IN NON-DUALISM

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

[Swami Vimalananda is an ex-Editor of *The Vedanta Kesari*. He has translated the *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad* into English with a lucid commentary in Sanskrit. In this article he depicts most impressively how an aspirant after spiritual life in the Hindu fold was expected to discipline his life and consolidate every step of progress that he made.—*Ed.*]

DEPTH, thoroughness and exactitude characterize the works of great masters of any discipline even though they have to express inevitably in the idiom and language of their space-time context. Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda is no exception to this rule when he expounds the non-dualistic system of philosophy and discipline. It is well known that he derived it from the Upaniṣads and the tradition of his spiritual forbears; and he tested it by his own insight and experience. In India, philosophy is accepted not only as a search after truth, but also as a way of life. The goal of human life is the realization of Truth. First it is intellectually grasped by reasoning and enquiry, and then followed up by a specific discipline. *Adhīti, bodha, ācaraṇa* and *pracāraṇa*, or acquiring, retaining, practising and sharing of knowledge, according to the poet-philosopher Sri Harsha, form the four successive stages. Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya propounded the non-dualistic system in thousands of words documented by the Vedic scriptures, and adopted a methodology winnowed out for centuries gone before him. The corpus of his works has won the esteem of the learned world for more than a millennium. Besides erudite commentaries, he has also left short metrical tracts which neatly epitomize all the essentials of the system which he worked out. The *Sopānapañcaka* or the *Pentad of Spiritual Ascent* is an example of conciseness, clarity and sequence. This short treatise helps an aspirant to see clearly the essence of non-dualism, to appreciate its method, to grasp its purport, and to incline his will to achieve the goal promised by it.

To begin with: spiritual growth is possible only when one recognizes that there is a spiritual reality and a method to attain it. This comes first from the knowledge mediated through words that are capable of conveying spiritual knowledge. Hence the necessity of authority as a source of knowledge; and Śruti is the impeccable testimony of Vedanta.

The FIRST LEVEL is therefore the study of the Scripture— वेदो नित्यं अधीयताम्. Śrī Śaṅkara assumes that physical, intellectual and environmental fitness, to benefit by the study of the scriptures, has already been reached in the earlier stages of progress which a person has to undergo previously. The study of the Scripture in ancient days was undertaken at the parent's home or, if they were not learned, in the home of the teacher. It was not a mere formal schooling for a few hours, but creating a situation in which the student would absorb into himself the words and the spirit of the scriptures expressed and exemplified through the instruction and life of the teacher.

The SECOND LEVEL is reached when the candidate engages himself in holy activities heart and soul, after having learned from the scriptures the nature and results of work. Here—तदुदितं कर्म सु अनुष्ठीयताम्—deserves close examination. Instinctive or impulsive activity is not *karma* according to this statement; the goading force for *karma* must come from beyond one's own tissue needs and social impulses. The injunctive power must have its source in a trans-personal reality. This is supplied by the impersonal Veda conceived as the spiritual patrimony of the race, existing for ever. A self-sufficient mind is the last to admit a spiritual reality into its horizon. A God-sufficient attitude is

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generated and maintained only when the candidate for higher inner evolution develops a trans-worldly perspective; and a strong faith in the Scripture leads to it. Śrī Śaṅkara therefore is insistent that the *Veda-śāstra* is the only refuge for a spiritual aspirant to start with. Though most of the originative injunctions of the Veda may have lost their force today in a different social context, the majority of restrictive rules affecting personal conduct are overlooked by the aspirant only with serious loss. In a world violently swayed by naturalism and relativism, man can find rest only in an enduring faith based on revelation accepted as an eternally valid witness.

Those who are not tired of repeating the unknowing criticism that the world-negating philosophy of Śrī Śaṅkara has hamstringed the racial will of India may notice here his special stress on the necessity of engaging oneself in fruitful activities intensely, blemishlessly and completely — *su anuṣṭhīyatām.* There is a stage at which unbroken activity alone can raise a man from the quagmire of degradation — this is accepted by all thinkers and by the paragon among them whose view we study. But a person good at something is not good at everything, and that not at all synchronically. Śrī Śaṅkara anticipated early what Swami Vivekananda wrote in a letter more than a millennium later 'And until we be ready to sacrifice for one idea and to one alone, we *never, never,* will see light'. This sacrificing for *one idea* — though almost an anathema in the modern society which is nurtured in polytechnic constructions and multipurpose schemes, persons, posts and professions — was the pivot on which Śrī Śaṅkara's unmitigated opposition to *samuccaya* or *sahānuṣṭhāna* turns. *Samuccaya* means coalescence of two operations or attitudes.

The propounder of non-dualism does not preclude combination of elements that mix; but *parāvidyā* and *vihita-karma* cannot mix; the former refers to a level at which individuality implying agency and possession is transcended, and the latter to a level at which duties bind an agent with possession and enjoyment. To the Achārya coalescing these two levels is like combining childhood, adolescence, youth and old age. He is in full agreement with the combination of mental or physical operations in a pre-determined sequence, though the agent be the same. But he sees nothing but incompatibility in negating individuality and at once positing agency. The argument that any physical movement is work, that no one who breathes on earth can be actionless, and so respiration or nutrition is as much work as transporting a load, managing a business, or piloting a jet air-craft has no force for the non-dualist. All these have their own place and level, but not for one whose concern is with the last lap of his spiritual voyage where his karma should be the lightest. Slightest distraction then brings upon him the sense of the greatest loss. But excepting the few, in a very large segment of humanity, all the rest must and shall work by the very force of their condition; and on this point he agrees with all utilitarians.

The aspirant is now at the THIRD LEVEL which is no doubt within the realm of intense activity, but activity now becomes God-centred instead of duty-centred— तेनेशस्य विधीयतां अपचितिः, काम्ये मतिः त्यज्यताम्. Faith in the eternal word of the Veda may confer a firmness of attitude and concentration of energy; but by that alone the mind is not purified, when conflicts and confusions brought about by desires and cravings last — though these desires may be more enduring than worldly pleasures and may be of a higher intensity. All desire for objects of pleasure must now be stopped from rising and the duties enjoined by the scripture must be undertaken only as a means of the worship of God. This prepares the way for the next higher level. It must be particularly mentioned here that worship of God is the spring-board in the philosophy of non-dualism, to soar to higher levels; and as such this type of acosmic monism is neither atheism nor next kin to it.

At the FOURTH LEVEL, the method to be practised to stop the rise of desires and cravings are laid down:

पापौघः परिधूयतां, भवसुखे दोषोऽनुसन्धीयतां, आत्मेच्छा व्यवसीयतां, निजगृहात् तूर्णं विनिर्गम्यताम् ॥१॥

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Sin is that which takes a man away from God, and it is the multitude of desires that stand between the soul and God. So by worshipping God the desires and cravings are suppressed in some measure. That alone is not enough; for men are found seeking a number of perishable enjoyments even from God. So long as a person approves and takes interest in the enjoyments of this world, his or her mind is not pure enough to reflect the Divine brilliance. So a conscious detachment from mundane pleasures has to be cultivated by pondering over the defects of worldly enjoyments.

Our passions are our misfortunes, the more of them the greater the calamity. By merely making a catalogue of the difficulties in this sad, bad, mad world of burning misery — which some try to extinguish with water and others with kerosine — we do not achieve much; we should recognize trials, vexations, afflictions and dissatisfactions of life only to turn our mind to spiritual well-being. The aspirant must therefore become Atman-oriented, and get out of the situation that holds him back from the quest of the Divine Self as soon as possible, when he has acquired the maturity for it. The etymological meaning of *griha* is 'what holds and retains' a person.

The homeless seeker is in a vacuum so long as he has not found the company of the good and the wise — a company into which he could be easily assimilated. When he has found it, he has risen to the FIFTH LEVEL:

सङ्गः सत्सु विधीयतां, भगवतो भक्तिर् दृढा धीयतां,
शान्त्यादिः परिचीयतां, दृढतरं कर्माशु सन्त्यज्यताम्.

Three characteristics are to be perfected at this stage. *Satsaṅga*, or good company, does not imply a dope to forget the worries of life. None will be admitted to the company of the good unless he has a strong inclination and the necessary striving to be good. At the second stage the spiritual seeker had learned to do enjoined duties as worship of God; but now he has to make his fervent faith in God and love for Him sound, steadfast, settled and irrevocable. Only a sciolist will say that there is no room for *bhakti* in non-dualism. It is devotion for God planted, nurtured and fruiting in the heart that impels a person to seek *satsaṅga*, and it is *satsaṅga* in turn that will maintain and increase his love for God. Further, outside the company of the holy and the good, a seeker commencing spiritual life cannot practise sense-control, self-mastery, retreat from harmful enjoyment of sense-life, forbearance, the attitude of unswerving God-ward love, and an atmosphere conducive to interior concentration. These cannot be practised in the medley of business. Those who seek an atmosphere suitable for the acquisition of the virtues enumerated just now must stop all work that entangle them more and more in the company of those who have no taste or inclination for the spiritual values which the aspirant would cherish and strive for.

When a spiritual seeker has ascended the levels mentioned earlier he is fit to find the SIXTH LEVEL. He is already in an atmosphere of spirituality, because he is in the company of the holy and the good; but in the level that immediately follows, he requires more specific help. A school of learned people, conspicuous for their noble conduct, cannot help the exercitant who wants definite direction in a single discipline. So even from among the good and the holy he must choose one director: सद्विद्वानुपसृप्यतां, प्रतिदिनं तत्पादुके सेव्यतां, ब्रह्मैकाक्षरमर्थ्यतां, श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं समाकर्ण्यताम् ॥२॥ वाक्यार्थश्च विचार्यतां, श्रुतिशिरःपक्षः समाश्रीयतां, दुस्तर्कात् सुविरम्यतां, श्रुतिसमस्तर्कोऽनुसन्धीयताम् ।

He has to approach a really good knower of the Brahman-Ātman Reality, and constantly attend on him with eagerness and submission. Only by watching the life and conduct of a Brahmavit and listening to his words with much care and ardency the seeker can progress in his path. Intimate personal service rendered to the Guru gives the aspirant opportunity to draw his grace, imitate his virtues, share his knowledge, and merit his protection from adverse influences. When the medium of love is established for the communication of knowledge, the disciple prays to the Guru for the saving wisdom, and he spontaneously instructs him in

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the terminal teachings of the Śruti. The disciple enquires deeper into the purport of Vedanta, but never deviates from the view established by the Śruti. He reasons in the light of the Scripture, but never turns argumentative or contentious.

The SEVENTH LEVEL depicts the effort to realize the final Truth imparted by the Guru: ब्रह्मास्मीति विभाव्यतां, अहरहर् गर्वः परित्यज्यतां, देहेऽहंमतिरुज्झ्यतां, बुधजनैर् वादः परित्यज्यताम् ॥३॥ Brahman-intuition is not inflation of the ego into infinity. It is a complete replacement of the empirical self by the unchanging eternal Reality — the self as I^1, I^2, I^3, I^4, etc. that are strewn across our conscious stream refunded into Brahman. It is not in fact any transplacement at all, but the intuition, that there is no duality of the cognizer 'I' and the cognized object, that only Bliss that is pure Knowledge and Existence — in which all duality is transfigured as the Supreme — exists. As a step to this realization, one may remind oneself constantly with the formula, 'I am Brahman'. One must beware of the pitfall hidden in this auto-suggestion. Even an intellectual assertion which equates the psychosomatic 'I' with the Plenum is open to the danger of plunging the exercitant into spiritual pride and intellectual vanity. He should therefore take meticulous care to be away from all assumed self-importance. The only way for it is to renounce all conceit in the body; for, identification with the body is at the root of all vanity and ignorance. All polemic must be given up at this stage; there must be an effort to renounce all kind of conceit and vanity based on identification with the body, senses, and everything connected with them.

If the aspirant of non-dualistic gnosis is intent on a total withdrawal from the world and individuality, how will he manage the rest of his life on this earth? Will not hunger and thirst make an inexorable demand on him, and jolt him out of his absorption in 'I am Brahman'? The two primary instincts cited may be treated as an illness that recurs and they are to be remedied with alms received without causing conscious hurt to anyone. This is not a counsel to a nation to go a-begging; but a permission for a rare individual who would demand nothing from the world, but the world considers his life precious as an example of self-denial which, admitted in some measure, alone makes civilization. No intelligent patient on his part, would choose his own taste when a kind physician administers to him some medicine. Neither would he take an over-dose of it, or prolong it beyond the period for which the recipé is given. So also the ascetic lover of Paramātman is contented with food in medical doses and does not wheedle for delicacies. He does not ask for more than what the law of causation brings to him in the operation of the moral law. If he works not at the dictates of the society, he eats next to nothing. And an enlightened society wants him because his material cost is least and spiritual value is most. Of course, when principles are discussed, no reasonable man would drag in the example of this or that individual. But even personalities are not wanting who lived the ideal: क्षुद्व्याधिश्चिकित्स्यतां, प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यतां, स्वाद्वन्नं न तु याच्यतां, विधिवशात् प्राप्तेन सन्तुष्यताम् ॥

The problem of housing has baffled the nation today almost as much as self-sufficiency in food. Apart from utility, vanity, luxury and comfort, which people desire, shelter is a necessity for protection from unbearable heat and cold. But for one who has no conceit in the body, heat and cold are not insurmountable obstacles. He who can treat the whole body as the face, can bear heat and cold easily. People are not wanting even today who can do this not because they are reduced to destitution and imbecility, but because they choose it by will. None covers his nose whether it is biting cold or scorching heat; and there are some who treat the whole body as such. This is one type of conquest of nature; but it is just a solitary crusade for freedom from the bondages of nature. An aspirant who has reached this seventh level, further, would not allow a word to escape from his mouth, that is not noble, worthy, and fruitful. God dwells in the heart of silence born of inner tranquillity. Nothing hurts more than spoken or written words when they are not properly

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guarded. Control of speech is extremely difficult for those who are brought up in prejudices. So the spiritual aspirant is always a non-partisan in all circumstances.

Today we are after a self-sufficient humanism; materialistic greed of personal and social welfare occupies the whole stage of our minds, and so an acosmic conception of Reality startles us. But the sage who weighed every grain of nature found out that compassion and cruelty in nature are a seesaw that will last for ever. He finds that construction and destruction move parallely. The sage made his own contributions, to nature and society, when he was in the chrysalis of his religious life; but he is now facing the flight of the alone to the alone. He is not interested in the world semblance and he is no more the possessor of anything, with which he could help, serve, or appease, the common man, except his own example of complete detachment and concentrated devotion to the spiritual Reality. There is no room for *kṛpā* and *naiṣṭhurya* in him. If he still has a strong desire to participate actively in the battle of life, he will find that *dayālor asamarthasya kṛpā duḥkhāya kevalam* — the compassion of the would-be benefactor who has no power to do a good turn to a prospective recipient as he wants it, is under fire of consuming misery — for feelings that do not consummate in appropriate action will only turn into disease. Hence he is always an *udāsīna* — a non-aligned witness in all respects. These thoughts are tersely expressed in the hemistich: शीतोष्णादि विषह्यतां न तु वृथावाक्यं समुच्चार्यतां, औदासीन्यं अभीप्स्यतां, जनकृपानैष्ठुर्यमुत्सृज्यताम् ॥ ४ ॥

The last stage is reached at the EIGHTH LEVEL described as follows: एकान्ते सुखमास्यतां परतरे चेतः समाधीयतां, पूर्णात्मा सुसमीक्ष्यतां जगदिदं तद्बाधितं दृश्यतां प्राक्कर्म प्रविलाप्यतां चितिबलात् नाप्युत्तरैः शिलष्यतां प्रारब्धं त्विह भुज्यतां अथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम् ॥ ५ ॥ The bud which was protected with the thorn and foliage and which then blossomed into the fragrant flower of steadfast devotion to God shining in the spray of holy company, has grown now into the fruit of intellectual conviction about the Reality and ripened into Self-realization. Śrī Rāmakrishna cited the analogy of the mother with the child, whose domestic duties gradually undergo reduction till she becomes visibly inactive, but intensely mindful of the newborn that is to see the light of day. At this level, the aspirant of non-dualistic realization becomes perfectly calm and inward. He delights in solitude; his mind is absorbed in the Supreme; he is in touch with the Paramātman, the Plenum; he sees this world presented to the senses with its inexplicabilities as rationally cancelled. For him it has transfigured into the Ātman-Brahman Reality. By this experience, not broken even for a moment, all the effects of the impressions of his earlier deeds melt away, and they leave no trace in him leading to future involvement. But his body moves on the momentum of his earlier deeds; he remains Brahmībhūta, none other than the Supreme Reality — Being-Intelligence-Bliss. No more he is reborn into this world.

This is the ladder of non-dualistic perfection delineated by Śrī Śaṅkarabhagavatpāda who admitted no polyvalent interpretation of the ultimate Reality. He stuck on to the dictum *Jñānād eva tu kaivalyam* — from Self-realization alone comes Liberation — though he found a subordinate place for all other readings of the Reality in his grand system.

'Not by accumulating riches, but by giving away that which you have,
'Shall you become beautiful;
'You must undo the wrappings, not case yourself in fresh ones;
'Not by multiplying clothes shall you make your body sound and healthy, but rather by discarding them...
'For a soldier who is going on a campaign does not seek what fresh furniture he can carry on his back, but rather what he can leave behind;
'Knowing well that every additional thing which he cannot freely use and handle is an impediment.'

—EDWARD CARPENTER.

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THE CONCEPT OF THE ABSOLUTE IN VEDANTA

SWAMI TAPASYANANDA

[Swami Tapasyananda, an ex-Editor of *The Vedanta Kesari*, is the Head of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trivandrum. Here, in this article, he delineates how the concept of the Absolute developed in India along with, and without antagonism to, the idea of God — the two being one and the same entity in two different perspectives.—*Ed.*]

Two types of minds, both talented and belonging to the same race, but situated in different lands with varying climatic and natural conditions, started on the long and endless mission of understanding the nature of things and the significance of life. The Greeks, living in their small fertile peninsula surrounded by silvery seas and beautified by low mountains and small rivers, found the image of perfection in that which is limited and defined by fixed boundaries and which could, therefore, come under the purview of human thought, speech and effort. Thus to the Greek the circle was the perfect figure, the limited City State the field for realizing the good life, and Nature visible to the senses the absorbing object of study. There was on the other hand the ancient Indian whose lot was cast in the sweeping limitless plains of a huge sub-continent with its mighty rivers and lofty mountain ranges. His mind spurned the finite as imperfect and worthless, and sought perfection in that which is limitless, all-inclusive, infinite and transcending thought and speech.

While among nations and among systems of philosophy it is possible to note an extreme stress on the one or the other of these tendencies, it is true to say that they are both inherent in the very structure of human thought. With our eyes, ears and thought we grasp discrete and well-defined forms, but the forms are changing from one condition to another centering round something more fundamental, vast and stable, namely, the material cause out of which they are formed. Thus there are various things like pots, toys, bricks, etc. made of clay. The pots, toys etc., are the changing forms of their comparatively stable cause, the clay. Clay itself is the effect of still more subtle and relatively stable substances that have combined to produce it. In this way when the gross changing forms are traced to their subtler and subtler causal conditions, we finally arrive at an absolute changeless substratum which is the ultimate source of all changeful phenomena. Without reference to the changeless substratum, the very phenomena of change cannot be grasped by thought.

To view the same problem in another way, when we see a thing we experience it as a series of attributes — sounds, shapes, colours etc. Each one of these attributes is different in itself from the others, but they are all held together, as it were, in a common object of reference, which may be called substance. We do not see the substance, we only see the attributes, but yet we are bound to accept the idea of a substance behind these attributes, as their unity in a common object of reference is otherwise inexplicable. Thus that which is obvious, definite, palpable carries with it the implication of its own self-transcendence into a changeless substratum or universal causal substance which is not involved in, or exhausted by, them. Here we are up against the concept of the Absolute, a concept so abhorrent to the practical-headed man of common sense, but which he has none the less got to accept if he is to be a consistent thinker.

It is the same compelling inner necessity may not be so much of thought as of life that has led to the origin and persistence of the idea of God among mankind. The God of the religious man and the Absolute of the philosopher form one and the same entity in two different perspectives. This is not, however, often realized both by the religious man

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and the philosophic thinker, consequently leading to the degeneration of religion into dogmatic cults and philosophies into mere speculative abstractions. It is the uniqueness of the Indian system of Vedanta that it has evolved a system of thought in which both these concepts are harmonized so as to form a non-dogmatic yet vital faith that is fully justified by reason and satisfactory to emotions.

We shall now discuss how this is achieved. The idea of God that is natural to an unphilosophical religious mind is that of an all-powerful will that is external to, and exclusive of the universe. He is conceived as an extra-cosmic being either producing the universe out of nothing by a fiat of His will, or as manipulating an already existing material stuff out of which He forms everything. Such a conception may be sufficient to meet the emotional and ethical needs of man, but it fails to satisfy the philosophical quest after an unchanging substratum that sustains all change without being involved in it — a universal substance which includes everything in itself. It is only when the concept of the Absolute informs and interprets the God of religion that the latter becomes really meaningful to human intelligence. But there seems to be an inner contradiction between these two concepts. God is a person and power beneficently disposed to man, but necessarily limited, being separate from the universe. The Absolute on the other hand is unlimited and all-inclusive, but it has no reference to human destiny, and therefore reduces itself into a mere intellectual assumption so far as man is concerned. To harmonize these two and give man a God, who is also the Absolute, is the task before the great Vedantic thinkers.

The Upaniṣads which contain the records of the highest spiritual experiences of the Rishis, the illumined sages of India, declare boldly the Absolute of philosophy and God of religion to be one and the same entity — the Impersonal-Personal Deity, Brahman. He is indeterminate (Nirguna) and acosmic (Nishprapancha) in His impersonal aspect, and Saguna, (with determinative attributes) and Saprapancha (with cosmic manifestation) in His personal aspect. They achieve this synthesis through the acceptance of two stand-points, the Pāramārthika and the Vyāvahārika. The Pāramārthika represents the way Brahman experiences Himself ; and the Vyāvahārika the way living beings see Him. The former is ultimate, eternal, and transcendental, while the latter is empirical, temporal and relative. Being the self-intuition of the Absolute, thoughts and words, whose sphere is the relative and limited, cannot give an actual description of the Pāramārthika but only an indirect and symbolic word-picure of it. Thus the Upaniṣads speak of Brahman as Satyam (Truth) Jñānam (Consciousness) and Anantam (Infinity). Truth means the ultimate causal substance, the changeless substratum which forms the implication of all changeful phenomena and which endows the phenomena with whatever reality value they possess. Such a substratum, even if granted, may be akin to the inertness of objective reality. To ward off this it is stated to be the Jñānam (Consciousness). But it is not to be mistaken for the little light of consciousness within us, as it is next described as Anantam, Infinite. It is thus excluded from everything finite and described by implication as that Infinite — the Pure Consciousness — of which our little individual consciousness is a faint perverted expression through the medium (Upādhi) of the intellect, mind and senses. Nor is it to be understood as an entity before us, an object before the philosophizing mind to be observed, understood and described. Being the substratum-consciousness, it is the core of the knowing self, and as such the real power of awareness itself. It is therefore impossible for it to be known as an object, just as it is impossible for the eye, the seer of all things, to be itself an object of sight. An Absolute known is no longer the Absolute, but a limited entity related to a knowing subject. The Absolute is in truth Nirviśesha, without determinations, and Nirupādhika, without limiting adjuncts i.e. without the characteristic marks of all objects of thought and descriptions.

The Absolute discussed above should not be mistaken for Śūnya, a nihil, or an empty nothing. The opposite concept of Pūrna, the

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full, is nearer the truth in so far as it is the substratum of all objective phenomena and the matrix of the self-conscious individual. The concept of Ānanda, Bliss-unending, is also applied to it in order to negate the common man's notion that pure being is pure nothing, and to show that it implies the summation of all values and not the denudation of them all.

The Absolute conceived as partless and indeterminate, as unchanging and non-objective, must necessarily be relationless. Yet it is spoken of as the Ultimate Substratum and the Eternal Witness, giving the idea that it is causally related to the phenomenal universe. But it has really no causal relation with it, since the changing phenomenal universe is only an appearance, so far as the Absolute is concerned. When a substance, say, a rope, appears as a snake to an onlooker, there is no real relation between the rope and the illusory snake, in spite of the rope being the substratum of the snake. Similarly Brahman, from the point of Its own self-intuition (the Pāramārthika) is relationless and transcendental, in spite of Its being understood as the cause of all by the individual consciousness that considers itself separate from It.

This doctrine of apparent manifestation is the crux of the philosophy of the Absolute, as the double status of reality represented by Pāramārthika and the Vyāvahārika, the ultimate and the empirical views, can be linked and justified only in the light of that doctrine. The illusory phenomenon of the snake-rope can illustrate the position. For the rope, the snake is non-existent. That represents the Pāramārthika view of the Absolute. But to the snake-conscious onlooker, the snake is a fact, and, though all the time he is seeing only the rope in reality, the rope as such is non-existent for him, it being displaced by the snake appearance as far as he is concerned. The snake consciousness represents the Vyāvahārika experience, apprehended as factual so long as the basic ignorance of the Reality lasts, but actually non-existent even during the time of experience, though this is realized only on the dawn of knowledge. Thus the absolute and acosmic being, the Nirguna Brahman of the Pāramārthika view, is apprehended in Vyāvahārika state as the All-inclus Whole, — the Saguna Brahman or the Ab lute in association with its latent Māyā Śak or creative power. This condition is unr to the Absolute, but real to the Jīva or fin intelligence. The Saguna Brahman rep sents the highest conception of the God religion. He is the creator and sustainer the universe as also the object of wors and devotion. The philosophy of the Ab lute is not therefore a negation of God many imagine but an interpretation of H It is an effort to reconcile reason with re gion.

Śri Rāmānuja, a great Vedantic think made an effort in later times to effect reconciliation without the doctrine of N guna Brahman, its thorough-going spirit monism and the ultimate denial of disti tion between Jīva and God. These impli tions are completely hostile to his devotio spirit. He is a thorough-going realist whom all experience is real, and plural and change ultimate facts. He accepts ultimacy of the three entities — mat (Achit), soul (Chit) and Īśwara (God), last being the Divine Lord and Master of others and possessed of infinite auspici qualities. Though equally real and ultim matter and souls are absolutely depend on God. God is not their creator, but their relationship with Him is so intimate fundamental that had it not been for G the other two could not have existed se rately. They cannot last even for a mom in isolation from Him. They are thus entir sustained and controlled by Him and th sole purpose is to be utilized by Him. T relationship is illustrated by the example an organism and its body. The central minating principle of life and will in organism represents Īśwara, and the di rent limbs and organs of it, existing sol for it and subserving its purposes and peri able in isolation from it, represent the wo of matter and souls. The All, included an inseparable organic Whole, with God dwelling, sustaining and controlling it in entirety and in parts, is the Pan-organis Deity, whom Ramanuja represents as Br man, the Absolute of the Upaniṣads.

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While this conception of the Absolute is found very congenial to many a devotional mind, it has one grave defect. If it provides for the all-inclusiveness of the Absolute, it fails obviously to secure its partlessness and immutability. It would seem that both these demands of reason are satisfied only in the Advaitic system of Śankara through its doctrines of two stand-points and its two fold conception of Brahman as Nishprapancha (the indeterminate, acosmic supra-personal Being) and as Saprapancha (the Cosmic Person with attributes and power of manifesting the universe of names and forms). There is, however, no reason why Rāmānuja's Pan-organistic doctrine should not be accepted as the most satisfactory interpretation of the Saprapancha aspect, without questioning, as Rāmānuja actually does, its acosmic and indeterminate aspect from the ultimate point of view. That at least seems to be the ideal of a true and satisfying philosophy of religion.

REVIVAL OR RENAISSANCE : RELIGION

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

[Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., is Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras. This article forms the text of a radio talk given by him over the All India Radio, Madras on April 4, 1963. We are indebted to the *Director, All India Radio, Madras* for having given us permission to publish the same.—*Ed.*]

THE dictionaries do not make any distinction between 'Revival' and 'Renaissance'. 'Renaissance' was the name given to the revival of art and letters, under the influence of classical models, which began in Italy in the fourteenth century. The term now refers to any revival in art, literature, etc. The dictionary meaning of 'Revivalism' is 'tendency or desire to revive what has gone out of use or belongs to the past'. Among the meanings assigned to the word 'Revive' are: 'to recover vigour and strength; to restore to life, reanimate; to render active and flourishing again'. In practical usage, however, there has come to be attached a shade of difference between the meanings of the two expressions. 'Revival' stands for bringing to life again something which is old and dead. Revivalist movements do not generally fit into the prevailing mood of the age; they look towards the past and not to the future. 'Renaissance' signifies a new flowering, a new awakening. Here no attempt is made to infuse life artificially into what is moribund or dead. A renaissance does not regard all that is old as good. The Italian Renaissance turned away from its immediate past, the medieval age, and found inspiration in a remote past, the classical era of Greece. And this inspiration did not consist in mere copying; it led to new forms and fashions in art and letters and it also paved the way for Reformation in religion.

The reform movements that started in India in the last century were not unlike those that the Italian Renaissance gave rise to. Under the influence of the foreign rule the intellectuals of the country had become alienated from their own culture. Speaking about the education that was being imparted to the young in his days Swami Vivekananda says: 'The child is taken to school, and the first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing, that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing, that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth, that all the sacred books are lies!' All that was old was despised. All that was Indian was looked down upon. India's religions were considered to be bundles of prejudices and superstitions, and were even blamed as being the cause of India's degradation, poverty and slavery. It was at such a time that reform movements such as Brahmo Samaj

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and Ārya Samaj arose. The leaders of these movements pointed out that the malpractices, injurious customs, and superstitious beliefs which had crept into Hinduism did not represent the original teachings of the sages, and that, on the contrary, they were deviations from, and distortions of those teachings. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, founder of the Brahmo Samaj, sought to justify the reforms he advocated on the basis of the Hindu sacred texts. *Satī*, he argued, was against Hindu Law; so was polygamy. Taking his stand on the Upaniṣads, he urged that there was no need for idol worship. Swami Dayananda, who founded the Ārya Samaj, condemned idolatry, animal sacrifices, offerings in temples, the caste system, untouchability, and child-marriages, on the ground that they lacked Vedic sanction. Although these leaders said 'Back to the Upanishads' or 'Back to the Vedas', they put their own interpretations on these texts, it must be noted, and in interpreting the texts they were not uninfluenced by the contemporary moods and criticisms which came from those who professed other religions. So, the reform movements were not just revivals of what were old and obsolete, but expressions of a new awakening that would lead India to a new life. Between the Italian Renaissance and the Indian there was, however, one difference. In Italy, the renascent spirit first appeared in art and letters; later on this induced the religious reformation in Europe. In India, it was the other way about. It was the religious awakening that manifested itself first; it led subsequently to a general re-awakening in literature, fine arts, and politics.

Important as these early reform movements were, they were but preludes to a deeper churning of India's soul. And, it is remarkable that one of the pioneers to initiate this churning was an unostentatious, unlettered temple-priest in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, the then Imperial city. Sri Ramakrishna had come from a village and circumstances led him to officiate as a priest in the Kali temple at Dakshineswar. He had already gone through intense religious experiences; these became all the more intense in the presence of the Divine Mother. He practised the different modes of Hindu religious disciplines and demonstrated their genuineness. He showed that even through the so-called idol-worship one could reach the summit of spiritual experience. It was clear from his example that the Tantrik form of worship ought to be, and can be, followed without any sordidness and sensuality. He found out that there was no opposition between worshipping a personal God and realizing the impersonal Absolute. Trying out the ways of other religions, he re-proclaimed the ancient truth discovered in India that there was no room for fanaticism in faith, that all religions led to the same goal.

Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna's illustrious disciple, carried the message of dynamic Hinduism to the West, and, on his return, was given a hero's welcome by his people from Colombo to Almora. He was the first great Indian leader to infuse into the men and women of India — especially the intellectuals — a sense of national self-respect. The term 'mild Hindu' had come to mean 'weak Hindu'. The Swami's first concern was to impress on the minds of all concerned that this notion was thoroughly wrong. Religion should make one strong and not weak. Swami Vivekananda's one message to the nation was that it should become strong. He also realized that the educated and privileged classes should work for the lifting up of the low and the downtrodden. It was a mockery to preach religion to empty stomachs and hungry mouths. India should free herself from all the ills that were oppressing her: political subjection, economic poverty, ignorance and ill-health, discrimination and injustice in the name of religion, superstitions and groundless fears. The Swami wanted us to get rid of all namby-pamby ideas; he urged us to take our stand on the one central truth in our religion, — the common heritage of the Hindus, the Buddhists and Jains alike, — the spirit of man, the Ātman of man, the immortal, birthless, all-pervading, eternal soul of man.

In making the intelligentsia of India aware of the greatness of their own heritage, the Orientalists of the West played a conside-

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rable role. When they discovered the ancient texts and extolled them, there was no longer any excuse for the educated Indians to despise the sacred lore or be indifferent to it. It was from such newly awakened Indians that a new leadership emerged, leading eventually to India's independence and the strengthening of the spirit of renaissance.

Lokamanya Tilak, father of Indian nationalism, was a great interpreter of our sacred texts. He was convinced that Indian culture far exceeded the limits in time and space fixed by the scholars of his day. In his classic work, the *Gitā-rahasya,* he has made out that the central message of the Gitā is a call for action. Mahatma Gandhi, who followed Tilak, gave to the world a new concept of politics based on spirituality. The Gandhian era will go down in history as marking the opening of a new chapter in mankind's progress towards perfection. Gandhiji's ambition was to build a new society on the principles of truth and non-violence which constitute the essence of religions. He knew that man was not ready for this yet ; still he showed the way in which direction he should march in order to survive and approximate to his goal. The source of Gandhiji's strength was Hinduism and the spirit of religion. India was uniquely fortunate in having had as her leader one who had unshakable faith in the deepest spiritual values. The stabilization of the present renaissance and its pervasive influence, we owe mostly to Mahatma Gandhi.

Other great Indians, such as Rabindranath Tagore and Subrahmanya Bharati, have contributed their share to the general reawakening of our people. In the purely spiritual realm, sages and saints like Sri Ramana Maharishi and Sri Aurobindo have exerted their powerful influence in transforming individual lives. It is when we get acquainted with such great ones that we feel convinced that the spiritual truths of which the sacred texts speak are not mere book-maxims. Since independence, more and more Indians are beginning to evince a keen interest in matters that relate to the spirit. Even in regard to the formal aspects of the practice of religion, there seems to be an increasing awareness of their significance and value. The places of pilgrimage, temples, Ashramas, etc., have begun to wear a new look ; they are no longer neglected now. Religious discources, festivals, retreats, and even inter-religious dialogues are getting to be popular. Religious establishments such as affluent temples and mutts are undertaking to run educational institutions. A look around India will convince anyone today that a new resurgent spirit is manifesting itself in the religious life of the people. But we cannot afford to be complacent. Forces of irreligion and profanity are operative, to be sure. They can be countermanded, not by any frontal attack, but by the gaining of greater purity in the personal lives of those who believe in the higher values. With vigilance and patience on the part of the faithful, the gains of the present renaissance can be consolidated, and India can look forward to a promising future.

The world of our experience consists at all times of two parts, an objective and a subjective part, of which the former may be incalculably more extensive than the latter, and yet the latter can never be omitted or suppressed. The objective part is the sum total of whatsoever at any given time we may be thinking of, the subjective part is the inner 'state' in which the thinking comes to pass. What we think of may be enormous, — the cosmic times and spaces, for example, — whereas the inner state may be the most fugitive and paltry activity of mind. Yet the cosmic objects, so far as the experience yields them, are but ideal pictures of something whose existence we do not inwardly possess but only point at outwardly, while the inner state is our very experience itself; its reality and that of our experience are one.

— WILLIAM JAMES.

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BUDDHA'S ANSWERS TO GREAT QUESTIONS OF LIFE

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

[Swami Budhananda, a former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari* is at present, an Assistant Minister, at the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco. Herein he deals with the most basic questions that every one faces in his spiritual life in the light of the answers the Buddha gave to a deva who had approached him in the guise of a Brahmin.—*Ed.*]

LIFE is a remorseless school house. Here we are required to learn our lessons, and learn well, before we can get out and be free.

People are not normally very sentimental about death but they are sentimental about life. Why? Because by living, they think, they can enjoy, whereas by dying they are out of luck. So long as we don't see that death is the obverse of life, so long shall we have to learn in the school house of life.

There are two ways of learning: one with tears and the other without tears. When we learn through trial and error, through receiving knocks and shocks, we learn with tears. When we imbibe the wisdom of the sages and follow the precepts of Godmen and saints, we learn without tears.

We are free to choose our ways, but learn our lessons we must before we can get out of the bondage and be free.

Life brings before us many questions. Some are basic and some are trivial. The basic questions concern all of us all our life. The trivial questions have relevance only in the particular contexts of individual lives.

The basic questions are indeed the great questions of life. The quality and movement of our life towards freedom all depend on whether or not we have found answers to these basic questions of life. For getting answers to these questions it is not necessary to depend only on our own intelligence and experience. For these answers we can draw from the wisdom of the ages.

One of the wisest men of the world was the Buddha. He answered many of the basic questions of life which at first sight may not always appear to be great. But when we understand the relevance of these questions in reference to our ultimate destiny, which is the attainment of freedom, then they will be found to be great questions indeed.

On a certain day when the Buddha dwelt at Jetavana, the garden of Anathapindaka, a lay disciple, a deva or celestial being in the guise of a Brahmin, came to the Buddha and asked him twenty one questions. The questions were asked in five groups of four, and finally one single question. Buddha answered them in a group of four. His answers were like crisp aphorisms, in the minimum number of words. And much wisdom is compressed in the aphoristic answers Buddha gave to those questions.

The Brahmin asked:

What is the sharpest sword?
What is the deadliest poison?
What is the fiercest fire?
What is the darkest night?

The Buddha replied:

A word spoken in wrath is the sharpest sword.
Covetousness is the deadliest poison.
Passion is the fiercest fire.
Ignorance is the darkest night.

In trying to understand these aphoristic replies we have to constantly remember that Buddha's wisdom has only one term of reference and that is Nirvana or attainment of illumination or freedom, which is the cessation of all miseries of life.

The Buddha himself said of his own teachings: 'As the great ocean has only one taste, the taste of salt, so my doctrine has only one flavour, the flavour of emancipation.'

Hence Buddha's answers to these questions have to be understood in reference to

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the requirements of emancipation. When we know for certain that the attainment of freedom is the ultimate objective of human life, then it becomes natural for us to take that alone as wisdom which leads to emancipation. Buddha has no other criterion of judging issues except from the standpoint of what will and what will not lead to emancipation or cessation of miseries of life.

Buddha's answers to the Brahmin's questions have to be understood from this standpoint alone. Otherwise his answers cannot be understood.

The Brahmin asked : What is the sharpest sword ?

The Buddha replied : A word spoken in wrath is the sharpest sword.

An ordinary sword wounds only the victim who is struck by the sword. But words spoken in wrath, which is the sharpest sword, wounds more the striker than the struck. Anger is temporary insanity. What is uttered in anger rebounds on the speaker with much greater vehemence than when they are released, and cuts the speaker of angry words to the quick. Angry words can cut to pieces bonds of friendship and our own images built by laborious efforts. Many other evil consequences may issue from angry words. At the root of many misfortunes in this world, many tragedies, there are words spoken in wrath.

There in the Dhammapada, the Buddhist scripture, which carries mostly Buddha's words, you read :

> Let one be watchful of speech-irritation. Let him practise restraint of speech. Having abandoned the sins of speech let him practise virtue with his speech.

The Dhammapada says elsewhere :

> Who controls his rising anger as a rolling chariot — him I call the real charioteer. The others only hold the reins.

One should control angry words and practise speaking only good words.

The Brahmin asked : What is the deadliest poison ?

The Buddha replied : Covetousness is the deadliest poison.

Buddha's main search was how mankind could be saved from inevitable sufferings of life. Through his independent search for the root-cause of all human suffering Buddha came to the conclusion that it was 'tanhā' or desire.

Desire poisons the limpid springs of life. The purpose of all spiritual disciplines is to minimize and ultimately destroy all desires, and thus become free through desirelessness.

Covetousness, instead of taking a man toward desirelessness, strengthens his existing desires and multiplies them. Hence it is the deadliest poison.

The Brahmin asked : What is the fiercest fire ?

The Buddha replied : Passion is the fiercest fire.

If our house catches fire we can run away and save ourselves. But passion is such a fierce fire that it overtakes us wherever we may run. It may burn down the work of our entire life. Even a learned man, who knows many things, but does not know how to subdue his passion, will come to grief. His whole life may become like a scorched earth. Sri Krishna therefore says in the Gita in an imperative mood : 'Conquer first this powerful enemy, the passion, which is difficult to be subdued.'

Passion is the fiercest fire because it burns to ashes all possibilities of emancipation.

The Brahmin asked : What is the darkest night ?

The Buddha replied : Ignorance is the darkest night.

In the darkest night, if you don't have a torch with you, you cannot find your way. You do not know where you are going. You are not sure whether the next step will land you in a ditch or throw you into a thorny bush.

Such is the case with the wayfarer of life who is ignorant. Even in daylight the ignorant man does not know how to choose a right course of action. He takes the apparent as reality, the impure as pure ; he takes the wrong as right. He sees everything in a wrong perspective. His thoughts being rooted in ignorance, his actions are all wrong. From such actions alone miseries of his life multiply, bondages increase. Therefore, one should carefully and with great patience

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remove one's ignorance and come out of the darkest night into the glow of the golden morning of knowledge.

The next group of four questions were :

Who gains the greatest benefit ?
Who loses most ?
Which armour is invulnerable ?
What is the best weapon ?

The Buddha replied :

He is the greatest gainer who gives to others.
He loses most who receives from others without giving a compensation.
Patience is an invulnerable armour.
Wisdom is the best weapon.

In answer to the question : 'Who gains the greatest benefit ?', the Buddha replied : He is the greatest gainer who gives to others.

It is a very ancient spiritual concept that the greatest gainer is he who gives the utmost. Ordinarily we think that those who receive are the gainers. But in the spiritual realm, a different law of returns is always operative.

Indicating this the Buddha says in another place : 'Charity is rich in returns ; charity is the greatest wealth, for though it scatters, it brings no repentance.'

Anāthapiṇḍaka, a lay disciple of the Buddha, a very charitable person and a supporter of orphans, intended to found a *vihar* where the Brotherhood could practise spiritual disciplines.

When Buddha saw that unselfish charity was the moving cause of his offer, Buddha accepted the gift for the Brotherhood. In accepting this offering Buddha said :

> The charitable man is loved by all, his friendship is prized highly; in death his heart is at rest and full of joy, for he suffers not from repentance; he receives the opening flower of his reward and the fruit that ripens from it.

Further said the Buddha, some very precious words, in the same sermon.

> Hard it is to understand: by giving away our food, we get more strength, by bestowing clothing on others, we gain more beauty; by founding abodes of purity and truth, we acquire great treasures.

The Brahmin asked : Who loses most ?

The Buddha replied : He loses most who receives from others without giving a compensation.

It is a spiritual fact that he gains most who gives to others ; it should be clear that he who only takes but does not give to others should lose the most.

Swami Vivekananda says :

> There is no higher virtue than charity. The lowest man is he whose hands draw in, in receiving; and he is the highest man whose hand goes out in giving. The hand was made to give always. Give the last bit of bread you have, even if you are starving. You will be free in a moment if you starve yourself to death by giving to another. Immediately you will become perfect, you will become God.

The Brahmin asked : Which armour is invulnerable ?

The Buddha replied : Patience is an invulnerable armour.

One who has this armour will have no irrevocable defeat. His ultimate victory is certain. If only we know how to be patient there is no such thing as failure in the world. What looks like failure is only suspended success due to want of patience.

In the Dhammapada, it is said, 'Patience is the austerity supreme'. Austerities are intended for the attainment of illumination. Patience is said to be supreme austerity because, granted patience, attainment of illumination is inevitable. And practice of all other austerities also depends on patience.

There is a Hebrew saying : 'Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.'

Saddled on patience we are sure to win any race.

In the Koran there is this exhortation : 'O ye who believe ! Seek help with patience and with prayer ; for God is with the patient.'

The devotee who is patient in resignation and keeps lying at God's door through all seasons, will surely see Him. One day the door will be flung open and he will be in the Great Presence.

The Brahmin asked : What is the best weapon ?

The Buddha replied : Wisdom is the best weapon.

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'The wise man', as Confucius says, 'is informed in what is right.'

Right thinking, understanding and action are the preoccupations of the wise man. He is occupied in search of truth and not merely in making a living. He lives in this world cautiously and handles the world cautiously. He understands his limitations and is always anxious for self-improvement, and eager to learn. The wise man is not irritated when troubles arise. He keeps his balance under all situations. The wise man does not seek to defeat others but is anxious to be of service to others.

Wisdom is said to be the best weapon not because it helps to defeat our enemy but because it helps us to have no enemy at all.

Man always stands self defeated. Wisdom is the best weapon because it vanquishes within us those causes which cause our defeats in the world.

Wisdom is the best weapon, because it helps us to know the Truth. And knowing the truth we become invincible. 'Know the Truth, and the Truth shall make thee free.'

Then the Brahmin asked the Buddha :

Who is the most dangerous thief ?
What is the most precious treasure ?
Who is the most successful in taking away by violence not only on earth, but also in heaven ?
What is the securest treasure-trove ?

The Buddha replied :

Evil thought is the most dangerous thief.
Virtue is the most precious treasure.
The soul can take away by violence not only on earth, but also in heaven.
Immortality is the securest treasure-trove.

The Brahmin asked : Who is the most dangerous thief ?

The Buddha replied : Evil thought is the most dangerous thief.

An ordinary thief may rob you of your precious belongings but he cannot rob you of your character. He cannot rob you of your power of discrimination and bring about spiritual ruination.

But evil thought can rob you of your character, your power of discrimination and even of the chances of your spiritual progress.

Moreover evil thoughts will eventually lead to evil actions. Evil actions will bear poisonous fruits. And those fruits will have to be reaped by the evil-doer.

Evil thought is therefore the most dangerous thief and also the worst enemy of man.

The Brahmin asked : What's the most precious treasure ?

The Buddha replied : Virtue is the most precious treasure.

Virtue is the most precious treasure because if we have all the wealth of the world but no virtue, in course of time, everything will become like ash in our mouth. Those who seek to prosper in sinful ways, eventually come to grief. Even if they may avoid the judgment of society, they cannot avoid the judgment of the law of *karma* which comes upon them as effect following the cause, as 'the wheel of a cart following the feet of the ox,' as Buddha says.

Virtue alone is our all-time all-place unfailing upholder, friend and supporter. When a man forsakes virtue there is nothing which can save him. When a man stands by virtue there is nothing which can destroy him.

You may aspire to have pleasure, wealth, wisdom or salvation, the four great values of life. Only those who seek them through the medium of virtue succeed in their aspiration.

Therefore Manu the great law-giver of the Hindus, says : 'You must slowly build up *Dharma* (virtue) even as ants the anthill.'

The Brahmin asked : Who is the most successful in taking away by violence not only on earth, but also in heaven ?

The Buddha replied : The soul can take away by violence not only on earth but also in heaven.

The meaning of this statement which is somewhat obscure appears to be that the soul survives everything else on earth and beyond.

The next question was : 'What is the securest treasure-trove ?'

The answer Buddha gives to this question makes his answer to the previous question a

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little more clear. He says, referring to the soul, 'And immortality is its treasure-trove.'

Being immortal, the soul is indestructible.

In the next group of four questions, the Brahmin asked :

What is attractive ?
What is disgusting ?
What is the most horrible pain ?
What is the greatest enjoyment ?

To which the Buddha replied :

Good is attractive.
Evil is disgusting.
A bad conscience is the most tormenting pain.
Deliverance is the highest Bliss.

The Brahmin asked : What is attractive ?

The Buddha answered : Good is attractive.

Generally speaking there are two classes of people in the world : the deluded and the awakened. Those who are awakened inwardly they find beauty in purity and goodness. They feel powerfully attracted to men of God though they may be ill-clad and far from being presentable.

The Brahmin asked : What is disgusting ?

The Buddha replied : Evil is disgusting.

To those who are awakened what is most disgusting is the evil in men. Outwardly a man may be handsome, a woman may be beautiful, but if they lack in purity and goodness they will appear to be most disgusting and most ugly to the awakened.

You may find that you are never tired of looking at a picture of Christ or Buddha or Sri Ramakrishna but you easily get tired of looking at the pictures of beautiful persons, whose shallowness after a while hits your eyes, as it were.

The Brahmin asked : What is the most horrible pain ?

The Buddha replied : A bad conscience is the most tormenting pain.

It is so because one cannot run away from it. No doctor can cure it ; no sedative works on a bad conscience. It pricks you all the time relentlessly. Bad conscience embitters all pleasurable things, turns all honey into gall.

The Brahmin asked : What is the greatest enjoyment ?

The Buddha replied : Deliverance is the height of bliss.

Deliverance is that state of our being in which we transcend all the causes of misery rooted in ignorance. Hence it is the highest bliss. Whatever other enjoyments we may have, they are only a very faint reflection of the bliss of deliverance.

In the following group of four questions the Brahmin asked the Buddha :

What causes ruin in the world ?
What breaks off friendship ?
What is the most violent fever ?
Who is the best physician ?

The Buddha replied :

Ignorance causes the ruin in the world.
Envy and selfishness break off friendships.
Hatred is the most violent fever.
And Buddha, the Enlightened One is the best physician.

What we call evil — the entire bulk of it — is rooted and nurtured by ignorance.

As Śankaracharya points out in the *Vivekachudāmaṇi*, from ignorance springs all our bondage. It subjects us to the long train of miseries such as birth, death, disease and decrepitude.

Ignorance is not negation of knowledge alone. It is positive wrong knowledge. It inculcates in us what is called topsy-turvy understanding, by which we take the unreal as the real, and the real as the unreal ; true as the untrue and untrue as true ; evil as good and good as evil.

When we base all our thoughts and actions on such topsy-turvy understanding, what but ruination can result from it ?

In answer to the question : 'What breaks off friendship,' the Buddha said, 'Envy and selfishness break off friendship.'

The basis of friendship, which is one of the greatest blessings of life, are trust and love. On this basis, friendship develops into understanding of a superior sort and becomes an enduring asset of life. Envy and selfish-

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ness eat away trust and love. And when the very basis of friendship is thus eaten away naturally it falls through. Selfishness is not the destroyer of friendship alone. It breaks homes, and business concerns, and charitable institutions.

Swami Vivekananda says :

> Selfishness is the devil incarnate in every man. Every bit of self, bit by bit is devil. Take off self by one side and God enters by the other. When the self is got rid of, only God remains. Light and darkness cannot remain together.

In answer to the question : 'What is the most violent fever ?'

The Buddha said : 'Hatred is the most violent fever.'

A violent fever unhinges the man suffering from it. In that state a man speaks in delirium and acts like a mad man.

Hatred unhinges a man and destroys his finer sensibilities. Even a learned man, under the spell of hatred, can commit most barbarious acts. What hatred can do to a man is known to those who had the misfortune to see a communal or racial riot, or those who read the accounts of Nazi extermination of the Jews.

No beast can ever behave more nefariously than a man seized by this most violent fever called hatred. And hatred always does more harm to the hating person than to the hated, spiritually speaking. There is nothing like justifiable hatred as there is nothing like acceptable cancer.

Yet the misfortune is, sometimes out of ignorance we even cultivate hatred and inculcate it even in our children in a variety of naive ways ; sometimes hatreds are cultivated even on national scales and that through the media of education ; sometimes hatred is propagated in the name of religion, in the name of patriotism which leads to mass hysteria.

But those who are thoughtful should understand that to harbour hatred is like kissing a most virulent cobra.

In answer to the question : 'Who is the best physician,' the Buddha replied : 'Buddha, the Enlightened One is the best physician.'

Kshemendra, a Sanskrit poet, offers salutations to the Buddha in this manner :

> Salutations to Thee, the perfect physician of the sufferings of the world, whose mind is completely filled with overwhelming compassion for creatures.

What moved Siddhartha, the Prince, to renounce the world was the anguish he felt for suffering humanity. He wanted to find a cure for the sufferings associated with human life.

He knew that before he himself was whole he could not heal. After enlightenment he used his illumination exactly in the manner a physician uses his knowledge to cure his patients. Buddha is therefore, a physician of the world.

He is the greatest physician of the world because he shows the way to enlightenment, which cures all diseases for ever by cutting the very root of transmigratory existence which is ignorance.

Here the Buddha is not paying a compliment to himself as a person as the best physician, but indicating that on attainment of the state of Buddhahood, the enlightened one becomes the best physician of the world.

It may be said that every God-man or prophet is the best physician of his times and continues to be even after his physical death.

Then the higher being in the guise of the Brahmin said to the Buddha :

> Now I have only one doubt to be solved ; pray clear it away. What is it fire can neither burn, nor moisture corrode, nor wind crush down, but is able to reform the whole world.

Buddha, the Blessed One, replied :

> Blessing ! Neither fire, nor moisture, corrosion nor wind can destroy the blessings of a good deed. And it will reform the whole world.

Stronger than all the destructive forces that are operative in the world is the power of our own good deeds. The blessings of good deeds are indestructible. In the ultimate analysis, man's true and unfailing

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saviour is his own good deeds. Both individual and collective salvation is possible only through good deeds alone.

The higher being, having heard the words of the Blessed One was full of exceeding joy. Clasping his hands, he bowed down before him in reverence, and disappeared suddenly from the presence of the Buddha.

We may not be able to unravel the mystery as to who was this Deva or higher being. But we all are grateful to him for putting to the Buddha so many questions on our behalf.

The answers which Buddha gave to these questions are aphorisms of wisdom. The more we shall think on them the better we will understand their relevance to our daily life in reference to our salvation.

PANCADASĪ

(*Continued from Page* 2)

वियदादेर्नामरूपे मायया सुविकल्पिते। शून्यस्य नामरूपे च तथा चेज्जीव्यतां चिरम् ॥ ३४ ॥

Viyadādeḥ, ether (ākāśa) and the like ; *nāmarupé*, name and form ; *māyayā*, by the power of Māyā ; *suvikalpite*, are assumed ; *śūnyasya*, of non-existence ; *nāmarupé ca*, name and forms also ; *tathācet*, if are assumed similarly ; *ciraṁ*, long ; *jīvyatāṁ*, live.

34. If you (the nihilist) say that you too assume names and forms to non-existence in a manner similar as we (Advaitins) assume names and forms (in the changeless), such as *ākāśa* and the like, by the power of Māyā then we bless that you may live long.*

* The Advaitins view names and forms as having been projected by the power of Māyā and as such not intrinsically real. If the nihilist says that in a *similar manner* has his name and form of *śūnya* been assumed then that *śūnya* also has no intrinsic reality, in which case the proposition that "*śūnya* existed" falls through, and the nihilist unwittingly accepts the Vedantic position. A position which the nihilist, probably, did not understand before putting forward the argument. The Vedantist here seems to amuse himself at this.

सतोऽपि नामरूपे द्वे कल्पिते चेत्तदा वद। कुत्रेति निरधिष्ठानो न भ्रमः क्वचिदीक्ष्यते ॥ ३५ ॥

Satopi, even of Reality ; *dvé*, the two ; *nāmarūpe*, name and form ; *kalpitecet*, if assumed ; *tadā*, then (in that case) ; *kutreti*, where ; *vada*, tell ; *niradhiṣṭhānaḥ*, without substratum ; *bhramaḥ*, illusion ; *kvacit*, anywhere ; *na*, is not ; *îkṣyaté*, seen.

35. What if it is taken that the two, name and form of *Sat* (Being) are also assumed (imagined) ?[1] In that case, tell us where, or of what, the name and form are assumed ? For nowhere is it seen that an illusion occurs without a substratum.[2]

[1] The contention of the Nihilist seems to be that before creation there existed only nihility (*śūnyaṁ*), which was of the nature of absolute void, and on that these name and form of the Being (*Sat*) have been deludedly superimposed.

[2] Void cannot be a substratum for superimposition as it goes against our all known experience. A snake is seen in a rope ; silver is seen in nacre. So there is always some real thing as ground on which something else is superimposed and not nothing. So the Nihilist's contention falls through.

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ADVAITA-VEDANTA CONCEPTION OF THE SOUL

ROMA CHAUDHURI

[Dr Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil., is Principal, Government of West Bengal Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta. She is also a scholar in Sanskrit. —*Ed.*]

'WHO am I?' 'What is this world?' — these questions are, nay, have to be asked by all, by every rational being, and the very beginning of Philosophy lies in these, and these alone. But what are the replies, replies that will satisfy all of us, as well as satisfy all the sides of our nature, — thinking, feeling, willing, intellectual, emotional, practical? Are such replies at all possible?

Of course these are possible — at least every philosopher claims this when he formulates his own theories. But there are checks, there are tests. And what theory can come out unburnt out of this ever-burning fire of criticism?

It is in no spirit of exaggeration, or fantastic pride that we assert that the Vedanta Philosophy of India has indeed been able to reply to these fundamental queries in a manner at once incontrovertible and ingenious.

Let us turn to the very basis of the Vedanta Philosophy — the immortals amongst the mortals — the wonderful Upaniṣads, and see what they have to say with regard to this matter.

What thrilling replies we get here: 'Tattvamasi' 'That thou art' (*Chānd. Up.* 6. 7. 7). 'Aham Brahmāsmi' 'I am Brahman' (*Bṛ. Up.* 1. 4. 10). 'Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma' 'All this, verily, is Brahman' (*Chānd. Up.* 3. 14. 1).

What exulting, exalting, exhilarating replies are these — at first sight, how unbelievable, how inconceivable, how unacceptable! For, how can 'I', this small and sinful and sorrowful 'I', ever desire to be, dare to be Brahman Himself? And how can the Universe, this mortal and material and mortified Universe also can ever do so?

But this is to the eternal glory of the Advaita-Vedanta System that it takes these supreme, sublime Veda-Mantras to be literally true.

And herein lies the beauty of the Advaita conception of the Soul: 'Ayamātma Brahma' 'This Soul is Brahman' (*Bṛ. Up.* 4. 4. 5).

Hence what *Brahman* is, *Ātman* too is — this is the one, and only one point in the benign Advaita-Vedanta conception of the Soul.

But is it, after all, so easy, and all that? What about your own direct experiences to the contrary? How can these be explained or ignored? For do we not directly feel that we are intimately connected with something physical, something material at every moment — with the physical world outside, with the physical mind-body inside? Thus, from all the sides of our nature, from the three fundamental sides, of thinking, feeling and willing, we are entirely dependent on all these. We need physical stimuli from the external physical world; we need physical stimulation of our organs and nerves and brain-centres of the internal physical body.

Thus, from the side of *thinking*, we are subject to ignorance, we have different degrees of knowledge, complete or incomplete, correct or incorrect and so on. From the side of *feeling*, too, we have pleasures, pains, anger, fear and the like. Finally, from the side of *willing*, no less, we have desires, strivings, successes, failures, and the like. But how can Brahman, the Absolute ever have all these? How can Brahman be ever ignorant or have incomplete, incorrect Knowledge? How can He ever be subject to pain, fear, anger? How can He ever have unfulfilled desires, striv-

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ings for unattained ends, failures and frustrations? Is He not, according to all accounts, all-perfect, eternally pure, eternally full, eternally free, eternally satisfied — *Nitya-Śuddha, Nitya-Buddha, Nitya-Mukta, Nitya-Tṛpta*? Then how can such ordinary, empirical, worldly states be ever possible in His case?

Here we come to the crux of the whole matter: Is the *Soul* really what it *appears* to be? *Apparently*, the Soul is all these, but *really* it is not, never so. This fundamental distinction between what is only *apparent* and what is essentially *real*, constitutes the very basis of Advaita-Vedanta. This, in fact, is the fundamental Advaita-Vedanta distinction between the *Vyāvahārika* and the *Pāramārthika*.

The *Vyāvahārika* standpoint is the ordinary, empirical, worldly stand-point, — the standpoint of our ordinary daily experiences: the standpoint of the Jīva, as fundamentally distinct from the Ātman. Is such a Jīva, such an individual, really associated with and inseparable from a physical body and a physical mind?

First, such a Jīva is a Jñāta, a Knower, a conscious being, with Jñāna or Knowledge or Consciousness as both its *Svarūpa* or essence and *Guna* or attribute. Such a knowledge or consciousness, as pointed out above, is only a kind of ordinary empirical, worldly knowledge or consciousness, called *Buddhi*, dependent entirely on physical and physiological conditions. The science of Psychology deals with these, and these are called 'mental states or processes' (*Citta-Vṛttis*) and these, according to the Vedanta, never constitute *real* states of Consciousness. However, from the worldly point of view, these *Citta-Vṛttis* constitute our knowledge, and the Jīva is *Jñāna-Svarūpa*, as well as a *Jñāta* through these.

Secondly, the Jiva is a *Kartā*, too; for, from the ordinary standpoint, 'knowing' ends in 'doing'. Hence a *Jñāta* is necessarily a *Kartā* no less. And, like its *Jñātṛtva*, its *Kartṛtva*, too, depends entirely on physical and physiological conditions. Thus, an external object arouses a desire in its mind; and that leads it to act in a particular way, necessitating corresponding physiological processes in the motor centres of the brain and the resulting in of certain movements in the muscles and limbs.

Thirdly, the Jīva is a '*Bhoktā*' also. This needs no further elucidation, as according to the fundamental Law of *Karma*, *Kartṛtva* necessarily, involves *Bhoktṛtva*, otherwise the agent will get opportunities to escape from the just consequences of its own voluntary acts. Hence, an agent must necessarily experience the results or *phalas* of its own *Sakāma-Karmas*; and that is why, one who is a *Kartā* is also a *Bhoktā*, no less.

Fourthly, the Jīva is *aṇu* or infinitely small. Why? To make the *Bahutva* possible.

First of all the Jīvas are infinite in number. Thus, if there is to be an infinite number of souls, then each must be infinitely small, to make room for others. What other alternative is really there? Strange that even in India, opposite views have been held, e.g. by Sāṁkhya, Yoga and Karma-Mīmāṁsa schools! According to these schools, souls are *vibhu* or all-pervasive; yet *Bahu* or infinite in number. But, how is that ever possible?

These characteristics of the Jīva are, however, not its permanent, essential, absolute ones; but only temporary, accidental, conditional ones. And here, we once more come to the crux of the whole matter: What appears, is not necessarily *real*: the Vyāvahārika is not the Pāramārthika.

The Vyāvahārika or the apparent, the empirical has not a logical basis to stand upon. Apparently the Universe of Souls and matter is real, very real, eternally real. But how can its creation be ever explained to the fullest satisfaction of all? Details cannot be entered into here. But consider one fact only, viz. that if Brahman be ever-perfect eternally, then, what more can He ever need, — what is His motive in Creation? Nothing, and so Creation itself is nothing. Also, if Brahman be all pervasive, then Jīva-Jagat are there eternally as His parts, as His Svagata-Bhedas, or internal parts. So how can they be created anew? Further, if Brahman be *Nirvikāra* or unchangeable, then how can He have activity, transformation, at all? Hence how can there be any creation at all? Further, if Jīva-

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Jagat be Svagata-Bhedas of Brahman, then how can they be different from Brahman — for, can there ever be anything 'a-Brahman', anything that is non-Brahman inside Brahman? That is absurd, for, inside the *Svarūpa* there cannot be at all something that is non-Svarūpa, as pointed out above.

All such numerous problems deluge us from all sides, but what is the way out — Yes, what? We pause for a reply, but in vain, for really no reply, no solution is possible.

So, let us better give up that vain effort, and admit straightaway, if not joyfully, that there is no creation, no universe of souls and matter at all. Then?

Then consider anew: what are we, what is the world? If we have not been created at all, then what are we, after all? Are we non-entities (*asat*), are we false (*Mithyā*)?

We are neither — we are not Jīvas, that is perfectly true, still we are neither non-entities, nor false — for, we are eternally what we are, we are *Ātman*, we are *Brahman*, the sole Reality. Why sole? Yes, sole, for duality is logically inconceivable. The ultimate Reality cannot be limited, or finite, it has to be all-pervasive, limitless. In that case, no second reality can exist outside It. And, inside It? As already pointed out above, inside a thing there cannot be anything which is not that thing. How can one ever go against one's own reality?

Hence, duality is impossible. Now, Oneness can be arrived at in two ways — negative and positive. Either, we say: The Universe of souls and matter is *false* and so there is only *One* Brahman. Or, we say: the Universe of souls and matter is Brahman and so there is only *One* Brahman. The Advaita-Vedantists, adopt the negative method mostly, and that is why, Advaita-Vedanta has been unjustly stigmatised as '*Māyā Vāda*', '*Mithyā Vāda*'. But really, it is neither — it is only '*Ātma Vāda*', it is only '*Brahma-Vāda*' in the most literal, most beautiful, most blissful sense of the terms.

'*Ātma Vāda*', '*Brahma Vāda*' — these are the last words of the Advaita Vedanta — rather, not these, but *this* — *this* only, for '*Ātma Vāda*' and *Brahma Vāda* are one and the same, as *Ātman* is *Brahman*, as pointed out in the beginning and this is not a metaphorical flourishing. We repeat, it is not a poetic outpouring, not an emotional outburst, but literally, actually, eternally true.

Thus, finally from the Paramarthika standpoint, the Soul as Brahman is negatively Nirviśesa, Nirguna, Niṣkriya, Nirvikāra, Nirañjana — without distinctions, without attributes, without activities, without changes, without blemishes; positively, *Saccidānanda-svarūpa* — Sat-Chit-Ānanda, Pure — Absolute Existence, Pure — Absolute Consciousness, Pure — Absolute Bliss, in essence.

What an absolutely enthralling, enlivening, enchanting, conception! Who says that the Soul is non-eternal, momentary, mortal? Don't you know that it is eternal, full, perfect Existence — with no beginning, no end; no birth, no death; no changes, no transformations, no growth, no decay? Who says that the Soul is ignorant, subject to illusion and delusions? Don't you know that it is eternal, full, perfect Knowledge — Knowledge that has no Knower, no Known; that has no increase and no decrease, no degree and no fluctuations, that is wholly independent of a physical stimulus and a stimulated mind-body complex. Who says that the Soul is subject to endless sorrows and sufferings, failures and frustrations? Don't you know that it is eternal, full, perfect Bliss — Bliss that has no enjoyer, no enjoyed object; that has no selfish desires, no physical satisfaction; that is entirely a kind of pure, perfect, pearless joy, happiness, fulfilment?

And such is the Advaita-Vedanta conception of the Soul. What can be more sublime, more inspiring, more gladdening?

And, such is the unique, wonderful, incomparable Humanism of Advaita-Vedanta— a Humanism that does not worship *Man* as *Man*; a Humanism that does not sing the glory of Man at the cost of that of *God*; a *Humanism* that has nothing to do with Materialism, Atheism, Sensualism; but a Humanism that *deifies* Man, rather than *destroying* God; a Humanism that *lifts up* Man to God, rather than *lowering down* God to Man; a

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Humanism that worships *Man* as *God*, in the most literal, most real, most complete sense of the term.

What can be more sublime, we repeat, more inspiring, more gladdening ?

And, at the end, let us, with reverence and joy, remember, anew the sweet and supreme message of the greatest Humanist of the Modern Age, Swami Vivekananda, who combined in an absolutely novel, peerless manner, Advaitism — generally associated with *Māyāvāda — Mithyāvāda*, over-indifference to the world at large, and over-Spiritualism, — with Humanism, generally associated with Atheism and over-Realism :

'No books, no Scriptures, no Science can ever imagine the glory of the Self that appears as Man — the most glorious God that ever was, the only God that ever existed, exists or ever will exist.'*

* *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. II. p. 250.

Symposium

SRI RAMANUJA'S CONCEPTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL SELF

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

[Swami Adidevananda is the Head of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mangalore. He has translated into English the *Yatindramatadīpika* (a treatise of Viśiṣṭādvaita) of Srinivasadasa. He has also translated the ten principal Upaniṣads, the Brahma Sutras and the Gita into Kannada.—*Ed.*]

THE concept of a real finite individual self is fundamental to the system of Viśiṣṭādvaita of Śrī Rāmānuja. First, knowledge presupposes a knower, some person or self. Without the knower, there is no knowledge ; without the experient, no experience. An individual self is *a priori* necessary to knowledge and experience. Second, the unity of the self is equally important. The mere existence of a human machinery with a transitory blaze of consciousness is not sufficient. From the beginning to the end there must be the same unitary self. If a person developed multiple personalities, the normal personality will not know anything connected with his phenomenal self. If the same person be not present in all stages of his life, there will be neither relevance nor continuous meaning in his experience. Third, besides a unitary self, there must be true objects of experience in space and time which can be presented to the consciousness. Fourth, the self is not phenomenal ; it abides in its own being in a metaphysical sense. Now, with these basic postulations we can examine Rāmānuja's concept of the finite self.

SELF IS ETERNAL

Brahman has for its body all individual selves and non-sentient elements. As such the self has existed in Brahman from eternity as an individual self and mode of Brahman. While the non-sentient elements do not possess any qualities in their subtle state prior to manifestation, the finite selves possess at all times the essential qualities like cognizance.

SELF IS A KNOWER

The finite self is essentially a knowing subject and not mere consciousness. While the self exists by and for itself, its attributive knowledge exists for another i.e., the self. The individual self is self-realized and at the same time the subject of knowledge. While self-hood is knowledge *per se*, attributive knowledge is about the objects. The two are

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inseparable, though logically distinguishable. The attributive knowledge is eternally associated with the self as its unique attribute. Though its functions are restricted in empirical existence, it always endures. In the state of liberation it becomes all-pervasive. If the self had intelligence as an adventitious quality as the Vaiśeṣikas view it, it would not much differ from a piece of stone. Nor is it an indifferent spectator like the Sāṅkhya Puruṣa.

Self is Monadic

The self is of monadic size. If it were omnipresent its movements like passing out cannot be reconciled. It extends through the whole body by means of its quality, *i.e.*, consciousness. Its monadic character implies that it has no extension, which is a property of matter. Since Brahman alone is infinite and all-pervading, the monadic character of the self distinguishes it from the Supreme. The monadic uniqueness of the self implies that it is finite and has no extension in the physical sense.

Self is a Mode of Brahman

The self is a mode or *prakāra* of Brahman which is therefore called the *prakārin*. It is called the mode of Brahman as it cannot subsist by itself without the substrate, *i.e.*, Brahman. Just as the body is the mode of the finite self which sustains it and uses it for its own purpose, the selves constitute a mode of the highest Brahman. Thus all the sentient selves (along with non-sentient things) are the modes of Brahman as they are derived from it and depend on it for their form and function. It should be noted that the modal character of the self does not cancel its substantive being, since it is different from Brahman and is itself a locus of experience. So it is a substance as well as an attribute.

Self is an Agent and Experient

The finite self is an active and purposeful being. The activity of the non-sentient *guṇas* is not attributed to the self as purposeful and self-initiated activity is its prerogative. If the self were not the intelligent experient of the fruit of action and at the same time the agent, the scripture would not enjoin action on it for achieving release or anything else. The self as an agent of action presupposes the freedom of the will. The inequalities of moral life with all its dangers are wholly traceable to the responsibility of the self. If the self's activity were determined by a higher will, it would be an automaton and the freedom of the will would be a myth. Freedom is a dexterous activity and the self exercises it whenever it wants. Even in empirical existence it has not lost its moral freedom though in liberation it finds its complete freedom. The self can attain self-sovereignty by subduing its lower instincts or sink into worldly existence by choosing them.

Plurality of Selves

Though all selves are alike, in so far as they have intelligence for their essence, they are separate and manifold, each having its sphere of experience and distinct character. This is proved by appeal to experience in all its aspects. Ontologically there is no difference between one self and another in the waking state. Experience of each self is unique and experience of one self does not get mixed up with that of another. Individuality is not destroyed or absorbed in the Absolute in the state of release, as it is not fabricated due to ignorance. If the maintenance of the individuality is the purpose of the Divine, the contribution of the individual self is to translate that purpose in its unique and distinctive way. Thus the experiences of the individual self and the highest Self, and of the several selves are not mixed up.

While affirming the pluralism of the finite selves Rāmānuja does not see any intrinsic inequality among them. So essentially all the selves are of the nature of the intelligence; the empirical differences are due to differences of embodiment brought about by *karma*. The essential nature of the self, intelligence, reaches its natural state in liberation. While equality is natural, empirical variations are due to past activities of the individuals. This postulation implies that God is not responsible for the embodiment

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of the selves and consequent suffering. Each self is architect of its own destiny.

In conclusion it may be said that Rāmānuja's concept of the finite self satisfies the three conditions of modal uniqueness, dependence, and purpose. As a mode the self derives its being from Brahman and is sustained by its immanence. As the self is controlled by God as its inner Self it absolutely depends on it. Finally the self subsists as a means to the realization of the purpose of God who is its Lord.

Thus Rāmānuja affirms the basic equality of the intelligence of all selves and provides full scope for the promotion of spiritual equality and social integration.

Symposium

SRI MADHVA'S CONCEPTION OF THE SOUL

P. NAGARAJA RAO

[Dr P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., is Professor of Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.—*Ed.*]

ŚRI MADHVA'S Dvaita Vedanta is the most powerful reasoned and scripturally supported challenge to the monism of Śankara. It is a theistic, pluralistic and realistic form of metaphysics. There are two orders or categories of Reality — the independent and the dependent.[1] Lord Narayana is the only independent category and all others are eternally dependent on the Lord. The distinction is an absolute fact, for ever true. The relation between the independent and the dependent is clinched in a number of verses in the *Aṇuvyākhyāna* of Madhvā. 'There is no independent potency anywhere in the universe (not in *puruṣa* and not in *prakṛti*). It is the Lord Himself that directs properly the various potencies of Nature and of the souls for production, growth, development, which are always dependent on Him. The *prakṛti, puruṣas* and their respective capacities, their very presence, cognizability and functioning, all these are controlled by the Lord, eternally, through His eternal power. Just as non-eternal things are ordained by the eternal will of God to be non-eternal, similarly, eternal substances too are ordained by His will to be eternal. This is established by *Śruti*, "without reference to Your will, nothing happens far or near". (R. V. X.112.9) The scripture also says, nature, souls, their karma, categories, Time, scripture, actions, etc. all these exist, function and are cognized only by His will and pleasure. They have no existence if He wills otherwise. Hence the very reality, existence etc., of *prakṛti* and other entities depend on His control.'[2] Souls are many in number. They are eternal, and indestructible and atomic. They have no birth or death. Birth is the *Kārmic* association of the soul with the body. The soul is not the body, nor the senses, nor mind, but it is that which uses all these with the help of the Lord. According to Śri Madhva the senses do not function by the power of the self, nor by them-

[1] स्वतन्त्रमस्वतन्त्रं च प्रमेयं द्विविधं मतम् ।
Tattvaviveka-1.

[2] अन्यत्र क्वापि शक्तिर्न स्वातन्त्र्येणेश एव हि ।
शक्तीस्ताः प्रेरयत्यजः तदधीनाश्च सर्वदा ।
सत्ताप्रधानपुरुषशक्तीनां च प्रतीतयः ।
प्रवृत्तयश्च ताः सर्वा नित्यं नित्यात्मना यतः ।
यथा नित्यतयाऽनित्यं नित्यशक्त्या स्वयेश्वरः ॥
नियामयति नित्यं च न ऋते त्वदिति श्रुतेः ।
स्वभावजीवकर्माणि द्रव्यकालश्रुतिक्रियाः ॥
यत्प्रसादादिमे सन्ति न सन्ति यदुपेक्षया
Anuvyakhyana, p. 13b.

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selves, but by the agents of the Lord who preside over the functioning of the senses. The soul is defined by Madhva as 'one who suffers sorrow, enjoys happiness and has the fitness to be bound in *samsāra* and to be released from it. It is known as *Jīva*. He cognizes himself in all states as "I" (aham)'.[3] Self-consciousness is a characteristic of the Self. The nature of the Self is bliss and knowledge.

The existence of the soul is established by the evidence of *Sākshi*. The Self is not one. Its plurality is established on the basis of the 'intrinsic diversity of their essence'. The diversity of human nature is due to their *karma*. Dr B. N. K. Sharma makes a profound observation that 'Karma theory would be powerless to explain the why of the inequalities of life, without recourse to the hypothesis of an intrinsic pecularity (*anādi-viśeṣa*) that is uncaused.'[4] Madhva establishes the plurality of the souls not only on the basis of the variations in the activities but also on the 'absence of direct-experience of another's experience as one's own'.[5]

Śri Madhva describes the relation between the soul and the Lord on the analogy of the reflection. The soul is the reflection of the Lord. Soul is the *pratibimba* and the Lord is the Bimba i.e. the prototype. 'Man is made in God's image.' This reflection theory '*Bimba-pratibimba-vāda*' has to be understood with care. Let us see what it does not mean. The reflection does not possess all the excellences of the prototype. It is only similar in a nominal sense and the suggested similarity implies that each reflection has its intelligence and bliss accordng to the degree of its spiritual perfection. The central significance of the analogy is that the reflection is dependent on the prototype. The reflection theory signifies dependence. Being eternal, still the souls are dependent on Him.

The analogy is not suggestive of the view that the reflection is illusory and it is there because of the adjunct (*upādhi*) the mirror. Madhva argues that the reflection would become *unreal* only under three conditions: (1) by the cessation of the prototype (2) by the disappearance of the adjunct and (3) by the disappearance of the relation between the two. All the three possibilities are ruled out. The Lord i.e. the prototype exists for ever, (2) the adjunct is not external to the soul like the mirror, it is of the very nature of the soul. It is his ineradicable *Finitude*. Hence there is no possibility for the relation of dependence to disappear. So the difference between the Lord and the souls or the differences between the souls themselves are *not empirical* but are *eternal*. The soul does not lose its individuality even in mokṣa nor its finitude. The relation is not *aupādhika*.

The souls are all not of one type. Some souls are innately wicked and some are infirm in their faith and a third type have faith. The third type is called the *mukti-yogya*. They alone attain *mokṣa*. The first is never to attain the Lord. The second type called Nitya-samsāris dangle between the earth and heaven. ... Individual souls differ in the quality of their intrinsic nature, which persists even in *mokṣa*.

Further every soul, on account of its Karmic effect, takes on many a birth. In the state of *samsāra* it suffers all the ills to which 'flesh is heir to'. The true nature of the soul is veiled from it. This veil is called *jiva-ācchādika*. There is another veil called *paramācchādika* which hides the resplendent nature of the Lord from the soul. *Mokṣa* is the rending of these two veils, and this is secured by not mere freedom from Karma but by the grace of the Lord, which is to be secured by *bhakti*. Madhva does admit *ajñāna* but not of the type described by Śankara. The *ajñāna* is in the soul. It is positive and real and not imagined. Bondage can be removed only by the grace of the Lord after we have his vision direct (*aparokṣa*). The will of the Lord is the cause for redemption. 'Bhakti implies the firm and the unshakable love of God, which rises above all other ties of love and affection, based upon an adequate knowledge and conviction of His majesty. That alone is the

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[3] अहमित्येव यो वेद्यः स जीव इति कीर्तितः ।
स दुःखी स सुखी चैव स पात्रं बन्धमोक्षयोः ॥
Vishnutattvavinirnaya, p. 26.

[4] & [5] *Sri Madhva's Teachings in his own words*. Dr B. N. K. Sharma. Pub.: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. P. 78-79.

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means to Mokṣa.'[6] 'Mukti is giving up of what is extrinsic to one's own nature and reposing in one's own nature.'[7] Bhakti which is backed by Jñāna and Upāsana, based on an ethical life and ceremonial purity results in *mokṣa*. In *mokṣa* also there is difference in the degree of bliss enjoyed by the souls.

[6] माहात्म्यज्ञानपूर्वस्तु सुदृढः सर्वतोऽधिकः
स्नेहो भक्तिरिति प्रोक्तस्तया मुक्तिर्नचान्यथा ।
बन्धको भवपाशेन भवपाशाच्च मोचकः ।
कैवल्यदः परं ब्रह्म विष्णुरेव सनातनः ।
भक्त्या ज्ञानं ततो भक्तिस्ततो दृष्टिस्ततश्च सा ।
ततो मुक्तिस्ततो भक्तिः सैव स्यात् सुखरूपिणी ।

[7] मुक्तिर्हित्वाऽन्यथारूपं स्वरूपेण व्यवस्थितिः ।

Symposium

THE CONCEPTION OF SOUL IN SAIVA SIDDHANTA

V. A. DEVASENAPATHI

[Dr V. A. Devasenapathi, M.A., Ph.D., is Professor of Philosophy, Advanced Centre of Philosophy, University of Madras. Well-conversant with the Śaiva Siddhanta mode of thought the writer presents its view on soul in a lucid manner.—*Ed.*]

Is there anything like a soul other than the physical body? If there is, is it one or many? If there are many souls, what is the final truth? Do we have a plurality of souls in the state of release also? To all these questions, the Siddhāntin gives his answers.

Śaiva Siddhānta speaks of Pati (the Lord), Paśu (soul) and Pāśa (bonds). It considers all the three as beginningless. An oft-quoted verse of the *Tirumandiram* says, that of the three spoken of as Pati, Paśu and Pāśa, like Pati, Paśu and Pāśa also are beginningless (anādi). This may be conceded. But the question may be posed: Are Paśu and Pāśa endless also? If so, what is meant by release? The Siddhāntin accepts the principle that whatever is real cannot go out of existence and that the non-real cannot appear. So having accepted Paśu and Pāśa once, we cannot argue them out of existence. Release is release from bondage caused by the root-evil of *āṇava* (egoism) and its attendant evils, *māyā* and *karma*. Freed from the impurities or bonds, souls continue to exist at and after release. Release will have no meaning if, after accepting bondage and working for its removal, we say that One alone is real, and that there could be neither bondage nor release for that One. What, according to the Siddhāntin, is meant by the words *the One* is that the Supreme principle is One. It does not follow that there is none else beside the Supreme. In fact, it is meaningful to talk about the Supreme only in relation to others dependent on it. *Pati* is Pasupati — The Lord is the Lord of souls.

What is the justification for talking about souls in the first place? Perhaps the truth is that there is no soul — nothing! In fact there may be nothing which is ultimately real. This is a plausible starting-point. But is it a tenable or meaningful one? What is it that says there is nothing? Surely the void does not articulate its non-existence. *Nothing* does not say, 'I don't exist'. So giving up this position, another may be taken up. There is something and this something is the body. The Siddhāntin examines this and various other positions, suggesting the sense-organs

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or the internal organs, or the vital air etc. to be the soul. He points out the difficulty in each of these positions and comes to the conclusion that there is a spirit or soul, apart from all these. This position may be accepted but a plurality of such souls may not be accepted. As a matter of fact, as we saw just now, reference may be made to the Scriptures which speak of the One without a second. The Siddhāntin replies, as we saw, that the One without a second, is the Lord — and therefore the Scripture rightly speaks of the Lord as the One without a second. But souls are not the Lord. The *Śivajñāna Siddhiyār* makes it clear that though the Lord and the souls are both intelligent principles, they are not identical. It says : 'The Lord is the intelligence that is grace ; the soul is the intelligence which attains that grace. The Lord is the intelligence which gives the knowledge that prevents birth and release ; the soul is the intelligence which receives it. The Lord is the informing intelligence and the soul is the informed intelligence. Thus, though both are intelligences, even when they unite, they do not become identical but are non-different.' In other words, there is entitative difference but experiential non-difference.

The case for a plurality of souls is thus summed up by Śivāgra Yogin in one of his works : 'Because of impurity, souls are of limited intelligence ; and engaging in deeds, they are subjected to births in countless bodies. As different from one another, they quarrel by using such terms as "I" and "You". There is difference in the pleasure and pain they experience ; there is difference in their knowledge. Besides, for whom has the Lord created the world. If the world is created for itself, we must remember that the world is inert. No material object enjoys another material object. If it is said the Lord enjoys the world, the reply is that the Lord is perfect and so needs nothing for His enjoyment. If it is said that creation is the Lord's sport, we must point out that the Lord who is the embodiment of wisdom, does not engage in fruitless activity. Thus, by elimination of the world and the Lord, we are left with the position that creation is in accordance with the *karma* of countless souls and is for their benefit.'

Souls are classified by the Śiddhāntins into three groups :—

(1) Those with three impurities *āṇava, māyā* and *karma*. These are called Sakalas.

(2) Those with two impurities — *āṇava* and *karma*. These are called Praḷayakalas.

(3) Those with only one impurity — *āṇava* alone. These are called Vijñānakalas.

Souls are subject to five states : (1) Waking (Jāgrat) (2) Dream (Svapna) (3) Sleep (Suṣupti) (4) Turīya and (5) Turīyātīta.

From another point of view three states are spoken of — Kevala, Sakala and Śuddha. In the Kevalāvasthā souls *just* exist. They are not rid of their impurites but are in a disembodied state. In the Sakalāvasthā, they are embodied and are given opportunities by the Lord to have experience which will promote or retard their moral and spiritual growth, either as they use these opportunities, well or ill. In the Śuddhāvasthā, they are rid of all impurities.

Perhaps, some explanation must be given about the impurities or bonds. Of the three, *āṇava, māyā* and *karma, āṇava* is said to be the root-evil. Like verdigris in copper, it exists beginninglessly with the souls. It is egoism, self-centredness. The soul, on account of egoism, uses its body and other worldly objects, evolved from *māyā*, for its selfish enjoyment. Thus *māyā* becomes another bond for the soul. When egoism prompts a sense of ownership (*mamakāra*), claiming objects as one's own, what happens really is that attempting to own the world the soul is owned by the world. To possess a watch is to be possessed by the watch ; to attempt to possess the world results in being possessed by the world.

Once again, egoism prompts a sense of agency (*ahamkāra*). The soul thinks, speaks and acts, claiming credit for the results of these. Yes, but according to thoughts, words and deeds, being good or evil, the consequences also will be good or evil. The soul, having claimed agency for what comes out well, cannot repudiate it for what goes wrong. The soul's *karma*, consist-

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ing of the consequences of good as well as evil deeds, binds the souls, so long as the sense of agency persists. When the soul, by repeated births and deaths, gets tired of the transmigratory process and realizes the need to engage in activity, not from a sense of agency and not from a desire to enjoy the fruits of good *karma* and escape those of bad *karma*, but from a sense of being an instrument in the hands of God, its egoism is undermined. *Karma* ceases to bind it. So also the products of *māyā*, the physical body and worldly objects are now used in the worship of the Lord and in the service of His creatures.

All this takes a long, very long time. Usually many births are required. There are lapses and back-slidings. But through them all, there is the one redeeming purpose of God to save the souls from their bondage.

The soul is said to be Sadasat in Śaiva Siddhānta. This does not mean that it is existent-non-existent. It means that the soul is of a disposition to identify itself with its environment. In the presence of the world (*asat* — but *asat* does not mean here non-existent ; it means that which has no intrinsic value), it behaves as a worldling. In the presence of the spirit, it conducts itself as a child of the spirit. This is a profound psychological truth — that the environment influences one's actions very strongly. To illustrate this, the Siddhāntin speaks of the soul as a prince who has been kidnapped by gipsies in his infancy and who grows up in their ways. When the king rescues the prince and reveals his identity, the prince changes over to the royal ways. The other fact, emphasized by the psychologist, viz. heredity, comes into operation.

It is clear that the Siddhāntin considers the soul, ontologically as *sat*. It is Sadasat, only psychologically. Perhaps we may also add, that it grows into full maturity when it considers itself as of no worth and finds all worth in God and His creatures. In the earlier stages of its growth, it made the mistake of counting itself as of supreme worth. Now the attitude is completely changed. In its unredeemed state, the soul pulsates with *ahamkāra* and *mamakāra*. Grown to full moral and spiritual maturity, the soul pulsates with love of God and service to His creatures.

This is the saga of the soul according to Śaiva Siddhānta.

Symposium

MYSTICISM OF THE SELF, MULTI-VALUED LOGIC AND DIALECTIC

C. T. K. CHARI

[Dr C. T. K. Chari, M.A., Ph.D., is Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology, Madras Christian College, Tambaram. Herein he clears some misconceptions, which are prevalent in the West, regarding mysticism and deals at length with the multi-valued logic and dialectic, and concludes that 'the most sophicated exercises of logic are fruitful in so far as they lead to mystical consummation'.—*Ed.*]

THE truth about the Self for the highest Indian religion is not some dry and corrugated 'system'. It is mystical realization, a more genuine communion with the Ultimate than is possible in the reveries of reason. Mystical realization transcends completely the domain of logic. Logicians, be they Advaitins, Viśiṣṭādvaitins, Dvaitins or Śaiva Siddhāntins, who scud for the safety of some port or other, must put out on the high seas of mysticism again. It is the merit of W. T. Stace's *Mysticism and Philosophy* (London : Macmillan & Co., 1961) that it states in an uncompromising fashion the

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mystical repudiation of logic. 'The mystics of all countries and ages have always with one accord affirmed that their experiences were "above reason" or "outside reason". That their experience is beyond reason means simply that it is beyond logic. And we cannot reject this testimony unless we reject the whole of mysticism as a fraud.' Stace shows, with an insight rare in Occidentals, that the 'mystical paradoxes' cannot be explained away as 'rhetoric', 'misdescription', 'double location' of apparent contradictories, and plain 'ambiguity'. Goldsmith said of the scholar's quest: 'Those who travel in pursuit of wisdom walk only in a circle and, after all their labour, at last return to their pristine ignorance.' Hafiz's stricture was harsher: 'None hath guessed and none shall guess enigmas, none may understand.' Mysticism puts us in an even worse quandary.

The fashion of decrying mysticism as emotive nonsense is by no means dead in the logical coteries of the West. C. I. Lewis and C. H. Langford, in their *Symbolic Logic* (New York: The Century Co., 1932, p. 212), cautioned their readers against falling into a state of 'mystic wonderment about nothing'. A. J. Ayer condemned the mystic for his sheer inability to 'produce any intelligible propositions'. Mysticism is simply acquiescing in a 'mystery which transcends the human understanding'. 'But to say that something transcends the human understanding is to say that it is unintelligible, cannot be significantly described, cannot be defined in terms which are intelligible to reason.' Ninian Smart has recently said, in a volume issued in honour of Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan, that it is disaster to base the unity of religion on an 'ineffable intuition'. An 'ineffable truth' asserts nothing and, therefore, denies nothing. Smart has prudently busied himself with the *assertions* and *denials* of Indian philosophy.

The mistake is to suppose that the mystical quest starts and ends with a 'wonderment about nothing'. The mystic sets out with the questions, the perplexities and anxieties of all religions. Is God personal, infra-personal or supra-personal? Is He in time? Is the Self identical with Him, different from Him, or both identical and different? Is the world good or evil? The starting-point of the quest may even be the query which plagues the natural man, for all his blankets of hedonism and cynicism: Is life worth living? Mysticism is the suspending of all questions in a unique confrontation with the Ultimate. What the Abbé Brémond says of *belles-lettres* is true in a stronger sense of mysticism: 'In literary criticism a moment comes when reasoning must cease and contemplative recognition take over. ..We, the pedants, the weighers of syllables, and dissectors of images, find our glory equally in our resistance prolonged to the utmost and in our final surrender to the mystery.' What the student of Indian mysticism misses in Ayer, Smart, and perhaps even in Stace, is the prolonged logical resistance which yields to mystical realization. The unplumbed depths of the self are best recognized by fashioning the plumbing rods of logic and scientific discourse to perfection. Betty Heimann, in her *Facets of Indian Thought* (London: George, Allen & Unwin, 1964), praises India for her progressive mystical techniques which execute the 'leap' only at the end. 'Ambiguity' here is a source of enormous logical productivity. In *Philosophy East and West* (1952, 1953, 1954), and in the *Revue internationale de philosophie* (1956), I have dwelt on this paradox of logic trying to keep house with mysticism.

Brouwer's intuitionistic mathematics, the multi-valued logic of Vassilyev and Lukasiewicz, and Hegelian dialectic all make serious departures from the two-valued logic of ordinary discourse. The progressive nature of the mystical 'supra-logic' can be set forth by contrasting it with these logics. Adopting the current terminology, we may say that every logic is specified by its fundamental matrices. The device of using 'truth-tables' was anticipated by C. S. Peirce; but its implications were realized only after it was rediscovered by E. Post and Wittgenstein. Writing T and F for 'true' and

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'false' respectively, the matrices of a classical two-valued logic can be written :

p	not-p
T	F
F	T

p	q	p and q	p or q	p or non-p
T	T	T	T	T
T	F	F	T	T
F	T	F	T	T
F	F	F	F	T

There are 16 different ways of correlating a column of T's and F's with the first two columns. Six of them are : p ; q ; not-p ; not-q ; p and q ; p or q. It can be shown that the remaining ten are expressible in terms of these six. The three functions p, q, 'neither p nor q' suffice in fact. In this calculus, 'p or non-p' is true irrespective of whether p is true or false. It is not necessary for the proof that p should be an elementary proposition. The proof holds when p is any *finite* combination of elementary propositions. The law of excluded middle or the *tertium non datur* can be demonstrated for propositions which have just two possible values, T and F. In ordinary computer logic, the laws of contradiction and excluded middle, assure us that a two-way switch is *either* open *or* closed but *not both*. It is obvious that in all mysticism the specific religious questions about God, Self, Time, Good and Evil are met by rejecting the matrices of a two-valued logic. Mysticism does not lose itself in a 'wonderment about nothing'. On the other hand, it is encountering a logical impasse.

In the propositional calculus of *Principia Mathematica* and allied systems, the practical equivalence of the laws of excluded middle and contradiction is a technical consequence of the interdependence of the logical constants, 'and', 'or' and 'not'. The non-independence may be explained in words thus : 'p and q are both true if and only if it is false that either p is false or q is false'. In the intuitionistic calculus of Brouwer, the symbols of conjunction, disjunction, negation and implication, $\wedge, \vee, \neg, \supset$, respectively, are logically independent of one another. $a \supset b$ ('a implies b') is not the same as $\neg a \vee b$ ('not-a or b') where a and b are propositions. The law of contradiction is embodied in the intuitionistic formula $\neg(a \wedge \neg a)$ not (a and not-a). Although the formula $a \supset \neg\neg a$ ('a implies not-not-a') occurs in the calculus, $\neg\neg a \supset a$ ('not-not-a implies a') does not occur; nor $a \vee \neg a$ ('a or non-a'). The classical $\neg\neg a \supset a$ is replaced by $\neg a \supset (a \supset b)$. In Kolmogorov's 'solution calculus', the law of excluded middle ('p or non-p') does not occur, since it would mean our establishing for *all* problems *either* that a method of solving the problem is available *or* that the assumption of a method entails a contradiction. The analogy of Brouwer's calculus with the mystical paradoxes is limited. Mysticism does not operate with a criterion of 'constructibility'. It rejects not only the attempts to *solve* certain ultimate problems but also the attempts to *prove in principle the inadmissibility of all methods*. It seems to me that Professor Stace belittles this aspect of non-provability. He finds more than a hint that 'mystical truths' are 'not provable' by logic. By analysing each side of a 'mystical paradox', he thinks that we can show that the paradox is 'supra-logical'. I submit that such an analysis would yield a 'contradiction' (piling up of mystical contraries which have the force of contradictories) but not a 'supra-logic'. A 'contradiction' implies a collision with logic and not necessarily a transcendence of logic. The analogy of Kolmogorov's 'solution calculus' is not unhelpful here. The problems dealt with in mysticism are *neither* susceptible of methods of solvability in principle *nor* of proof that the assumption of *any* method implies a contradiction. Mystical realization means, if it means anything at all, that logic itself is transcended.

The Russian philosopher, N. A. Vassilyev in 1924 issued a warning against conceiving the Aristotelian law of contradiction in too general a sense. He speculated on the pos-

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sibility of a logic in which there would be no negation in the ordinary sense, in which S is *both* P and not-P. Vassilyev attempted to show how a syllogism in his new logic would differ from the traditional Aristotelian syllogism. A hypothetical illustration he provides is of considerable interest to students of mysticism. He argues that, in our ordinary experience, all sensations are positive, even those, due to non-active causes, like black colour or black sensation. Vassilyev hazarded the suggestion that a domain of experience with pure negative sensations, non-A, is possible. In that domain, a subject may be A and also non-A. Léon Chwistek, in his *The Limits of Science* (London: Kegan Paul, 1948, pp. 129-130), is of the opinion that Vassilyev's 'neutral proposition', S is P and non-P is 'undecidable'.

Jan Lukasiewicz has constructed three-valued and multi-valued logics in which the *tertium non datur* has no unrestricted validity. The matrices of a three-valued logic may be set forth thus:

p	not-p
T	U
U	F
F	T

p	q	p and q	p or q
T	T	T	T
T	U	U	T
T	F	F	T
U	T	U	T
U	U	U	U
U	F	F	U
F	T	F	T
F	U	F	U
F	F	F	F

Instead of a *tertium non datur*, we have a *quartum non datur* in this logic: 'p or (not-p) or (not-not-P)'.

A. A. Zinovév has remarked recently (1963) that the development of multi-valued logics robs the classical two-valued logic of its seeming *a priori* character. It does not follow, according to him, that the new logics are just permissible *linguistic* conveniences. They may find applications in the world of experience. I have argued for this contention in *Philosophy East and West*. Stace hazards the guess that logic is not necessarily valid in *all* worlds. He does not speculate on certain logics being valid in certain domains. Hans Reichenbach worked out a special form of three-valued logic in the context of modern quantum mechanics. In this calculus, while certain propositions describing certain states of the electron are in principle unambiguously 'true' or 'false', other propositions referring to other states are in principle neither 'true' nor 'false' but 'undecidable'. Although Reichenbach's calculus has not found favour with quantum physicists, it is a fascinating exploration of a possibility. A humbler application of a three-valued logic to computer mathematics may be of interest. Combinatorial networks which do not behave ideally during changes of an input state can be treated as dependable by incorporation within a wider framework. A. D. Huffman (1957) expresses the usually held opinion that no new switch-algebra is needed. Against this, G. K. Moisil has argued recently (1960) that ordinary two-valued logic is useful only in expressing steady states of a relay. It does not adequately represent the transitional behaviour during the time in which a relay is changing its state. Moisil proposes a special form of Lukasiewicz's three-valued logic to deal with the problem. Earlier, Bocvar had proposed a three-valued logic to be able to deal with certain celebrated mathematical 'paradoxes'.

Is the analogy between mysticism and multi-valued logic plausible at all? Contrary to the opinion expressed by J. F. Staal (*Advaita and Neo-Platonism*, University of Madras, 1961, pp. 20-21), I hold that in

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some ways the analogy is plausible. Staal makes no technically adequate attempt to examine multi-valued logics. I have stressed the point in an article contributed to a forthcoming volume on Contemporary Indian Philosophy to be published by the Andhra University. Staal makes a jejune attempt to dispose of the 'mystical paradoxes' by the methods of 'ambiguity' and 'double location' of seeming contradictories. I agree with not only Stace, but with N. O. Lossky and S. L. Frank that the attempts fail and that the 'metalogical' character of mysticism should be frankly recognized. Just how relevant is a three-valued logic with an 'Undecidable' value to mysticism? I have indicated the limits of this logic by discussing the mysticism of Swami Vivekananda in *Philosophy East and West* (1954). The following remark is relevant here. The most vital questions of the mystic are those met exclusively by a 'rational undecidability'. The case in which p and q *each* carries U and in which (p and q) and (p or q) are necessarily U is of overwhelming interest for mysticism. Likewise Vassilyev's 'neutral proposition', S is *both* P and non-P, which is 'undecidable'. The columns carrying T and F values shed their relevance in mysticism. But the matrices of a three-valued logic can be exhibited only by working with *all* the values T, F and U. Generalizing the matrices of a two-valued logic with a *quartum non datur*, therefore, yields no special insight into the nature of mystical realization. To work *only* with *U* is to operate with something which is not a 'truth-value' in the current terminology. None the less, the fact that a three-valued logic has found an application in so practical a field as computer algebra is sufficient to warn the critic of mysticism that, in certain domains, the operations of ordinary logic may fail. Stace simply asserts this possibility without an appraisal of the modern departures from Aristotelian logic.

Stace contends that Hegels celebrated 'identity of opposites' is extracted from mysticism. He blames Hegel for making a pseudo-logical principle of this and trying to erect a super-logic on it. N. O. Lossky, in his *Mystical Intuition* (Prague: Russian University, 1938, p. 28), grouped Hegel with 'philosopher-mystics' like Plotinus, Proclus, Bonaventura, Nicolas of Cusa, and Solovyof. F. A. Lea, in his *A Defence of Philosophy* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1962, p. 66), says of Hegel: 'Like his master Spinoza, he was essentially a mystic.' Ernst Müller, in his *A History of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1946, p. 160, footnote), thinks that Hegel's 'trinitarian scheme' of thesis, antithesis and synthesis comes close to the Cabbala. This view that Hegel was inspired by the mystics is disputable. There is evidence to show that he only exploited them in the interests of a supposed rationalistic logic. The references to Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus and Jacob Boehme in Hegel's lectures on the history of philosophy are benevolent but patronizing. 'That of which Plotinus became conscious in his ecstasy is philosophic thought, the speculative Notion, Idea.' This does not concede much to the mystic.

Zinovév remarks that multi-valued logics and Hegelian dialectic are similar in going beyond the ordinary two-valued logic. Hegelian logic, however, unlike the multi-valued calculus, permits of professed concrete applications to history and problems of methodology which do not come within the ambit of a formally conceived calculus. Hegel today is being 'rediscovered' not only by the Marxists but even by those of a different persuasion. The understanding (*Verstand*) or the lower thought, with its law of excluded middle, keeps the opposites apart, according to Hegel. Reason (*Vernunft*) achieves a synthesis in which the opposites are dissolved, cancelled, transfigured, raised to a higher level, sublimated, etc. Hegel himself speaks of *erhalten und verklaren*. To suppose, as a contributor to the January 1964 issue of *The Monist* (devoted specifically to Hegel) seems to do, that Hegel's *Aufhebung* (rendered into English by 'sublation', on the analogy of the Latin *tollere* and *sublatum*) carries just the *three* meanings of preserve, cancel and raise to a higher level, is ludicrous. The expression defies translation by its nuances in different contexts. Croce pointed out that Hegel does not want

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us to surrender to an extrinsic and arbitrary numerical triplicity (*Triplizitat*). There is no magic in the number three as such. We think in one concept not in three.

Does Hegel succeed in assimilating mysticism to his logic of 'sublation'? The neglect into which he has fallen in certain quarters has made the treatment of the whole question slovenly. Hegel claims to eliminate a contradiction with a new law of dialectical synthesis which, I should judge, is much more than Bosanquet's amended law of contradiction in which the contraries have the force of contradictories in the framework of an exhaustive disjunction. Hegel claims that his new law sheds light on the several domains of history, art and religion. The paradox of mysticism consists in *neither* retaining *nor* rejecting opposites whereas Hegel's *Vernunft both* retains *and* rejects opposites by sublimating them; Being (*Sein*) and Nothing (*Nichts*) dissolve in Becoming (*Werden*). Mysticism achieves no such transparency. The manner in which the mystical opposites confront each other is opaque to *all* logic. To call it U seems better than to call it *Aufhebung*. Whatever Hegel's success in other directions may be, I hold that the specific issues about God and Man, the One and the Many, Personal and Supra-personal, on which mysticism gives its verdict, do not yield to any reasonable 'synthesis'. The failure of the Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian theories of time is notorious. They seem to be beyond all aid of artificial respiration.

Ramakrishna Vedanta is *not* Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Dvaita, or Śaiva Siddhānta; *nor* a glib 'unity' of these mutually discrepant systems. Sri Ramakrishna's simple and unlettered utterances are a triumphant mystical blaze in which the 'systems' (the *pūrva pakṣa* and *Siddhānta* techniques) shrivel into nothing. When Ninian Smart and others brand the 'ineffability' as exegetically worthless, when Stace suggests that the experience is *not* ineffable since it is *expressed* by a contradiction, I must strenuously object. The most sophisticated exercises of logic are fruitful in so far as they lead to the mystical consummation. The beats of the gull's wing subside in the titanic tempest; the sheep tracks fade away in the blue distances. Sri Ramakrishna taught: 'What God is, none can define in words. Everything else has been defiled, as it were, like the leavings of food. The Vedas, the Tantras, the Puranas, the systems of philosophy — all are defiled; they have been studied by men, and they have been uttered by the human tongue. In a sense, therefore, they are no longer pure. But there is one truth, one substance, that has never been defiled, and that is the truth of God. None has ever succeeded in describing That in words.'

The mind is never right but when it is at peace within itself; the soul is in heaven even while it is in the flesh, if it be purged of its natural corruptions, and taken up with divine thoughts and contemplations.

— SENECA.

* * * *

I am fully convinced that the soul is indestructible, and that its activity will continue through eternity. It is like the sun, which to our eyes, seems to set in night; but it has in reality only gone to diffuse its light elsewhere.

— GOETHE.

* * * *

Everything here, but the soul of man, is a passing shadow. — The only enduring substance is within. — When shall we awake to the sublime greatness, the perils, the accountableness, and the glorious destinies of the immortal soul.

— CHANNING.

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THE SELF IN THE REALIST SCHOOLS

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

[Prof. S. Rajagopala Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras. He presents here the conception of the soul in the different realist schools but with special reference to Purva Mimamsa.—*Ed.*]

ONE characteristic difference between Indian and European philosophy lies in the emphasis which the former lays on the concept of the Self or the Ātman. It is a foundational concept and it lies at the very basis of our philosophical thought. The treatment of this subject determines the nature of the system. It has at the same time considerable importance on the ethics, theory of knowledge and metaphysics of the system. All schools of thought excluding the materialists, are agreed on the essential immortality of the self but they differ in details consistent with their general philosophical background. The soul is an indivisible, eternal principle and exists apart from the body, mind, senses, *prāna*, etc. though it appears to be closely allied to them. The Cārvākas argue that what is called the soul is nothing more than the body with consciousness and that there is no proof for its existence apart from the body. But the more enlightened Cārvākas maintain that there is a soul apart from the body, that this is the permanent knower and experient but that it is destroyed at the death of the body. The Bauddhas also deny the existence of the Self and to them the Self is nothing more than a stream of cognitions. According to other schools of Buddhism, the self is an empirical aggregate of body and the four kinds of mental processes, viz., feeling, perception, disposition including will and self-consciousness. But all the *āstika* systems reject these points and believe implicitly in the existence of the eternal spiritual principle called Ātman.

The acceptance of this Self-principle leads to many complicated problems, some of which may be stated as follows: Has the Ātman any attributes or qualities and if so, what are they? Are these qualities also eternal or are they merely ephemeral? What is the relation between the Ātman and these qualities? Are they to be viewed as inherent in a substance? Is the Self one or is it infinite in number? Why does it manifest itself always in a body, senses, *manas*, and so on and never independently and separately from them? What type of perception of the Self is possible or is it one whose existence is only to be inferred? If the body, the senses and mind are to be regarded as appendages to the Self, are they the selections of the self or are they imposed on it by an alien power? How is the Self to be realized in its pure state and is such realization possible? Many such problems may be multiplied but these illustrate the extreme difficulty which surrounds the subject when we try to unravel them.

The quest in India has always been for the permanent and the eternal, as opposed to the transient and the ephemeral. Applying a line of analysis which is both logical and metaphysical, Indian thinkers have arrived at the conclusion that Brahman alone is ultimately real. It is the absolutely eternal and unconditioned. It is not an effect from a cause; It is the ultimate cause of every thing in the universe. It is pure existence, pure consciousness and pure bliss. It is at the same time *satyam, jñānam* and *anantam* (truth, knowledge and infinity). Applying this principle subjectively to man, we see that the body, the senses, *manas, prāṇa* and other factors constituting a psycho-physical entity are impermanent and the only eternal principle — the innermost — is the Ātman. The pure principle of the macrocosm is completely identical with that of the microcosm.

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This is revealed by the statements in the Upaniṣads, '*Tattvamasi*', '*Aham Brahmāsmi*', '*Ātma ca Brahma*' and many others.

This line of analysis has made it easy for the Hindu philosopher to start with the conception of this central principle. The practical implications of this teaching are very important both in theory and in life. The truth that man does not die with the death of the physical body has effected a revolution in our attitude to life and also to religion. Coupled with the corollary that there is nothing arbitrary or casual in our experiencing happiness or misery and that these are due to our own deeds, good and bad, we begin to believe in the theory of *karma* and are stimulated to live a good life.

That there is a principle or a psychic factor independent of the physical body is a very old and accepted postulate by almost all the systems of thought. The Upaniṣads make constant reference to the existence of the Ātman. The *mahāvākyas* identify the individual self with Brahman and we thus get the position that the empirical ego or *jīva* is nothing less than the impersonal and absolute Brahman. In spite of these statements some commentators refuse to accept the position that the individual ego, is in the final analysis the Absolute.

We may very broadly speak of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and the Pūrva Mīmāṁsa systems as being realistic in their interpretations and we may first discuss what they have to say in connection with the existence of the soul. The Pūrva Mīmāṁsa system is not so dogmatically realistic in its investigations and there is a certain resilience about it which is absent in the unbending realism of the Nyāya school. We may first state the Pūrva Mīmāṁsa findings in this regard. In certain respects it approximates to the Upaniṣadic position and in others, differs fundamentally from the Advaita Vedanta system. The Self cannot be identified with the body, senses or *buddhi*. It is something different from all these for the main reason that the Self is eternal and imperishable. The body and the other associated factors are merely organs of experience and hence are material and impermanent. They require to be activated by the self which is non-material, conscious and omnipresent (*vibhu*). The self is associated with the particular body which the individual deserves, as resulting from the effects of his previous *karma* and actions. The happiness or misery of the person depends on the merits or demerits of the previous life. The self is an agent, cogniser and enjoyer of the fruits of actions. At the same time it is the substrate (*āśraya*) of pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, impression, cognition, volition, merit and demerit. These are the modes of the self. Though all these undergo change, the self continues to be fundamentally the same. We cannot describe the self either as absolutely changeless or as continuously changing. The above mentioned qualities are merely accidental and hence changes in them do not in any way affect the soul. Kumarila illustrates this point by referring to a snake which in spite of its adopting various postures still continues to be the same snake.

The question is asked how, if the self is regarded as an agent and experient, is it justifiable to characterize it as permanent and eternal, seeing that actions involve changes and modifications and that what is modified cannot be eternal. Hence either the Ātman is not eternal or it is neither an agent nor an experient. The Mīmāṁsakas attach very little importance to this objection for they argue that modification is not incompatible with eternity. The ocean, for example, undergoes many changes in the form of waves, foam, bubbles and so on. But still it continues to be the same ocean. The fundamental characteristics of the Self are sentiency, consciousness, intelligence and existence. These do not in any way get modified while cognitions, pleasures and other factors undergo change; but since these are merely adventitious, the eternality and continuity of the self is not in any way affected. We may note here that the Mīmāṁsakas do not argue like the Advaitins that the changes are unreal. The modifications are real; only they are accidental and adventitious. It is impossible for the Self to be an absolutely changeless entity or to change ceaselessly. The Realists do not subscribe to the view that Ātman is only one. The Advaita Vedantins argue that the

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real transcendental Self being Brahman is only one and that there cannot be two such Brahmans. But the Mīmāṁsakas and Naiyāyikas point out the self is not one but there are as many selves as there are individuals. The various selves with their different bodies, senses, *manas*, activities etc. are different from one another. The Mīmāṁsakas do not start with the metaphysical assumption that the self is pure in its original state, uncontaminated by the appendages like body, *manas* etc. and that it somehow became empirical. They merely start with the present real position of the self attached to the body undergoing pleasure, pain and other such experiences and assert that it could reach a state of absolute cessation of pain.

Regarding the perception of the self, there is some lack of clearness due entirely to the fact that what Kumarila has said has not been properly grasped. He says that the self is known by the 'I-Consciousness' (*aham pratyayagamya*). This does not mean that the Self is perceived by the I-Consciousness for it implies only that the notion of 'I' points to the mere existence of the self and not to the perception of the self. It is not that a mere mental perception (*mānasa partyakṣa*) can reveal the self to us. The *buddhi* cannot perceive the self for the basis of the *buddhi* is that very self. The Ātman cannot be perceived by the *buddhi* for in that case it would become both the subject and the object — and this is logically impossible. Basing themselves not on the texts of Kumarila but what his followers have said, the Naiyāyikas and the Advaitins have criticized the Mīmāṁsakas as saying that the self is a compound of consciousness and unconsciousness and that it is subject and object at the same time. But Kumarila has not subscribed to this fantastic view.

The Ātman is self-illumined (*svayaṁ jyoti*) and it is not illumined by any other thing. In this respect the Mīmāṁsaka agrees with the Advaitin who maintains that the self is pure consciousness and self-luminous. Kumarila quotes with approval the mantra in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 'When speech ceases, what light does the person possess? He possesses the light of the Self, Oh King'. (4-3-6).

The Nyāya view of the self is in some respects not sound. No doubt the self is taken as eternal but it is a substance. It is qualified by the several qualities of cognition: pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition, impression, merit and demerit. It is other than the body, senses, mind and so on. The self is not atomic nor of the size of the body. It is all-pervading, eternal and incorporeal. The qualities possessed by the self are transient while the self is eternal. It is the knower, experient and the enjoyer of the fruits of action. The most significant position maintained by the Nyāya is that the soul in its transcendental state of purity is not conscious. Consciousness arises only when the self is in contact with the body, mind etc., and in the absence of the body it goes without saying that the soul cannot have consciousness. *Caitanya* is the same as knowledge and in the absence of senses and other such instruments, knowledge is impossible. In the same way the qualities also disappear because they cannot be manifested in the absence of the body. It thus comes about that in its pure transcendental state the self is without any attributes and is completely unconscious. Such a self is almost equivalent to non-existence. But it should be remembered that like the other schools of thought, Nyāya also asserts the eternality and omnipresence of the soul and that the complete cessation of pains and sorrows is the characteristic of the liberated person — *apavarga*. The Naiyāyikas reinforce their conclusion that in the pure state there is no consciousness by pointing that in deep dreamless sleep (*suṣupti*) there is no consciousness. This state is the real true state of the self.

It may be incidentally pointed out that the Mīmāṁsakas do not believe that in the state of *mukti* there is the positive presence of bliss. If *mokṣa* consisted in the enjoyment of bliss, it would differ very little from *svarga*. But the later Mīmāṁsakas came to the position of Advaita and argued that the state of *mokṣa* is a state of bliss. The Nyāya also maintains that there is no bliss in *mukti* and Vātsyāyana concludes that what is called *mukti* is only the absolute cessation of pain.

The Nyāya concept of the self is very unsatisfactory when it is taken as a whole.

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the soul is unconscious in its pure and transcendental state, and acquires consciousness only in its empirical state, it is reduced to the level of inanimate objects. We cannot compare the repose of a stone to the liberated state of the soul. The denial of consciousness to the self is philosophically a very serious defect, for unless it is eternally conscious, we cannot, as Śankara says, even maintain that consciousness is absent. By describing the self as the possessor of nine qualities and by ascribing a non-eternal characteristic to these qualities, the Nyāya makes itself open to the criticism that when the qualities disappear, the substratum also becomes incapable of existing, because it is nothing more than these qualities. The description of the self as eternal and omnipresent seems to have very little meaning.

Symposium

TWO DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF THE SOUL IN CHRISTIANITY

WOLFRAM H. KOCH

[Mr Wolfram H. Koch, St. Moritz, Switzerland returns as a contributor after a lapse of a few years. His article on the conceptions of the soul in Christianity written in a lucid style will be interesting.—*Ed.*]

In spite of many different trends in the course of the centuries since the advent of Christ it cannot be said that any truly philosophical conception of the soul and its ultimate nature has been developed in Christianity.

To some it alone is the eternal, unchangeable, immortal, the only surviving part of man's personality, created at the time of his birth, absolutely unique and individual. To them the soul is like a window with the divine light perpetually striking upon it, and all souls who are unconditionally prepared to remove even the slightest stain of the creatures from themselves become immediately enlightened by God, or to express it differently, transformed in him, never, however, attaining any form of identity with him or ever losing their unique individuality.

In her book 'Castillo interior' Saint Teresa of Jesus says at the beginning of the first chapter: 'I do not know anything with which to compare the great beauty of the soul and her great capacity.....The soul of the righteous is nothing but a paradise where he (i.e. God) has his delight.'

This idea of the soul being the dwelling place, the 'castle' of God or Christ can be found in most Christian mystics and has been expressed in many different ways in their works notwithstanding the attitude of a number of modern Christian theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, who stress the point that body and soul cannot and should not be separated or erroneously separately conceived, and that this fact is clearly shown by the resurrection in the flesh which Christ alone of all great prophets and God-men has made possible for man: Christ's resurrection not being the survival of his 'soul' or his 'divine part', but that of the whole man, — his body and his soul. What, to them, really gives Christianity its uniqueness and its irrefutable claim to be the only perfect religion is this fact of physical resurrection which alone cancels death once for all and makes the salvation of the whole man possible and certain.

This rising of Christ from the tomb is the beginning of a new era for humanity, a new and perfect creation, as it were, without which there cannot be any real immortality.

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To these theologians there cannot be any eternal existence of the soul without the eternal existence of its physical body. They generally base this doctrine of the true nature of salvation and true immortality on I. Timothy, 6, 16 (Who—i.e. Christ—'only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto'). They say, that the whole man — and to them salvation must always mean the whole man — is body and soul, never body or soul alone, and that Christ's uniqueness consists in the fact that he alone came to save the whole man. They naturally deny any idea of reincarnation or of repeated lives as the body of each man exists but once and is never repeated. So, really speaking, there is no philosophy of the soul but only an article of faith, of dogma, to be believed by the orthodox, and salvation really means the simultaneous immortality of body and soul.

In this way of thinking there is a strong influence of Judaism, and most modern Christian theologians tend to reject all Neo-Platonic and Greek influences in Christianity which suggest and even stress the separability and ultimate separation of body and soul. To them, any such idea or teaching is absolutely unbiblical and nowhere in any way supported by the New Testament.

Ordinary Christian believers have, however, a vague notion of the separateness of soul and body even to-day as they are not fully aware of Greek or Judaic or unbiblical or extrabiblical influences in their everyday religious conceptions.

The rejection of Neo-Platonic influence naturally brings about a decided disparagement of many passages and teachings found in the great Christian mystics and saints and utterly invalidates all assertions like those of Saint John of the Cross e.g. that desire inflict two great evils on the soul, privation of the spirit of God and fatigue, torture, darkness, defilement and weakness of the soul which indulges in them, that they pollute and defile it, that there is greater difference between the soul and all corporeal things than there is between the most pellucid water and the finest mud, that the soul in its true eternal substance is as perfect as God has made it, that the soul must be emptied of all things and creatures so that God can do his will in it, if it ever wants to reach its true destination.

Symposium

LORD BUDDHA'S CONCEPTION OF THE SOUL

P. S. NAIDU

[Prof. P. S. Naidu, formerly Professor of Psychology in the University of Allahabad is at present on the Terminology Commission of the University Grants' Commission, New Delhi. In this paper he brings out that the Buddha's silence on the subject of Ātman did not mean a negation of it. He cites some Western Orientalists also in support of his statements.—*Ed.*]

It is generally believed that Buddhism does not subscribe to the doctrine of an immortal Self or Soul. Not only the general cultured public, but also some students of philosophy accept this belief uncritically. But those who have gone deep into the matter are inclined to question the grounds on which it is contended that Lord Buddha taught that the Self is impermanent. Let us survey the entire position and see whither the arguments lead us.

Some knowledge of the intellectual atmosphere of Buddha's time is indispensable in order to answer correctly questions relating to the teachings of the Tathāgata. In the sixth century B.C., when the Master lived

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and taught, two views of the Self or Soul seem to have been prevalent. One is the exalted view propounded by the Upaniṣads in the Mahā Vākyas, and the other, the lower (and sometimes degraded) view preached by the Brahminical teachers of the day. These teachers circulated fantastic accounts of the Soul, and went to the extent of giving its physical dimensions. Some of them spoke of it as a thin vapour which escaped from the body at the time of death. It is against these views that Lord Buddha protested strongly. On the other hand, the Upaniṣads teach the identity of the Individual Self and Universal Self. In fact there is only One Self pervading the Universe. This Self or Para Brahman is indescribable, and nothing can be predicated of it. It can only be experienced by direct, non-mediate Darśan (or in Nirvana). Apart from these two views, the exalted, pure, and noble view of the Self and the degraded materialistic view which was upheld by some teachers, there was another view known as the Atman-View. This represented the soul as existing apart from body and mind, but belonging to the individual in some unique sense. This soul was unaffected by all that happened to the body and mind of the individual. It was a sort of disinterested spectator, of the phenomenal changes occuring in the body and mind. It is this restricted individualised view that Buddha condemned ; it is this lower self that he denied. Nowhere does he deny the Universal Self which the Upaniṣads proclaimed. In fact there is enough evidence to show that Buddha accepted the Upaniṣadic view.

Let us state the Master's position from a different angle. Three things seem to have been indicated in the context of the Buddhistic thought, by the term 'self', namely, body, Soul and Spirit. Of these, the last, *spirit*, is identical with the Supreme Brahman of the Upaniṣads, and the Ultimate Reality of Vedanta. It is the transcendental reality which, when attained, destroys all sense of I-ness or ego-feeling and unites all beings. This reality is beyond the reach of reason, and is indescribable in human language. When questioned about this Ultimate truth, Buddha remained silent, but did not deny it.

The 'Siṁśupa leaf' incident may be mentioned here. Taking a handful of leaves, lying loose in the Siṁśupa forest, Buddha asked his followers which were the more numerous, the leaves in his hand or those in the forest. The answer is obvious. Buddha wanted his disciples to understand that what he taught bore the same relationship to what he withheld, as the leaves in his hand to those leaves in the forest. Only that much as was necessary for a holy life on the earth for attaining Nirvana was revealed. The rest was kept back.

The Vacchagotta incident throws further light on the problem. The wandering ascetic Vacchagotta approaches Buddha and asks, 'Now, good Gautama, is there a Self ?' Buddha is silent. 'Is there not a Self ?' Again the Master is silent. After the departure of the ascetic, Ānanda asks the Lord why he was silent. The Tathāgata's reply is revealing : 'Had I replied in the affirmative to the first question I would be joining hands with the eternalists ; had I said "Yes" to the second, I would be an annihilationist. Knowing as you do, Ānanda, my teaching "all things are not Self", could I have said "Yes" to Vacchagotta's first query. An affirmative answer to the second would have thrown the wandering monk into confusion. Hence, I was silent.'

The net outcome of this discussion is that Buddha had an experience of Self similar to that of the great Upaniṣadic seers, and chose to remain silent about it.

Support for this declaration of Buddhistic belief in the presence of the Universal Self behind the individual may be sought from the *Dhammapada*, *Digha-Nikāya* and *Vinaya Piṭaka*. The relevant texts are given below :

'Let a Bhikku reprove himself by the Self, and examine himself by the Self, so that he will live happily.' (*Dhammapada*, V. 60)

'Self is the Lord of the Self ...'
(*Dhammapada*, V. 379)

'I have taken refuge in the Self.' (Buddha in *Digha-Nikāya*, II. 120)

'... make the Self your refuge and your lamp.' (*Digha-Nikāya*, II. 100)

The Self referred to in these texts, we may safely conclude, is Cosmic or Universal Self which pervades the entire Universe.

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It is worth-while to note here the conclusions reached by certain scholars who have made a deep critical study of the problem. Christmas Humphrey,[1] writes : 'Nowhere in the scriptures does the Buddha deny the soul, but any attempt to explain such a complex problem to those whose fault was their love of metaphysical detail would have been of no help to them in attaining liberation from the wheel. Hence, beyond denying that those who said, "There is a Self", were any more correct than those who said, "There is no self", the Buddha as always on such subjects, maintained a noble silence.'

Edmond Holmes[2] remarks : 'In these and other discourses, Buddha falls into line with the thinkers of the Upaniṣads, who described by a series of negatives what they regarded as the true Ego — the Divine in man. The coincidences between his teaching and theirs are so significant that the only way to account for them is to assume that his faith — the deepest faith of his heart — was in its essence identical with theirs.'

Dr Radhakrishnan[3] points out that 'Buddha clearly tells us what the self is not, though he does not give any clear account of what it is. It is, however, wrong to think that there is no self at all, according to Buddha'.

Our conclusion is that Buddha denied the existence of the 'ego', but had profound experience of the Soul. He, however, chose to maintain silence about the Soul.

[1] Christmas Humphrey's *Buddhism*, Penguin Books, 1958, p. 86-87.
[2] Edmond Holmes, *The Creed of Buddha*, The Bodley Head, London, 1957, p. 171.
[3] S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin, 1923. Vol. I, p. 386.

Symposium

THE CONCEPTION OF SOUL IN SANKARA'S SUTRA-BHASYA

P. K. SUNDARAM

[Dr P. K. Sundaram, M.A., Ph.D., is Reader, Advance Centre of Philosophy, University of Madras. He delineates here the conception of the soul, its nature, and, release according to Śankara basing it on his interpretation of the Śruti texts.—*Ed.*]

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

THE soul is of the nature of intelligence. As some others like the followers of the Vaiśeṣika or Viśiṣṭādvaita schools of thought think, intelligence is not a quality of the soul, either adventitious or inseparable and organic. The soul is nothing other than reality. The appearance of its limitedness is due to the limiting adjuncts. There are scriptural passages to this effect : 'himself not asleep' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV. 3. 11) ; 'That person is self-luminous' (*ibid*, IV. 3. 14). Sometimes it is argued that since in deep sleep consciousness is not patently perceived, soul cannot be said to be of the nature of intelligence. But the reason why a person who is asleep does not see anything is, not that the intelligence is for the moment absent, but that *objects* are absent. This can be illustrated by the example of light. The light that pervades space with no object to illumine, cannot be said to be non-luminous. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* declares : 'That he does not see (in deep sleep) is because although seeing then, it does not see ; there is no cessation of the sight of the seer' (IV. 3. 23).

THE SIZE OF THE SOUL

The doubt arises with regard to the size of the soul because of the fact that certain pas-

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sages in the Scripture speak of the soul as passing out, going and returning, while some others speak of it expressly as atomic in size, and yet others as all-pervasive. From the passages like: 'When he passes out of this body, he passes out together with all these' (*Kauṣītaki*: III, 3); 'All who depart from this world go to the moon' (*Ibid*: 1, 2); and 'From that world he returns again to this world for action' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV. 4. 6), it is made out by some thinkers that the passing, going and returning would not be possible if the soul were unlimited in size. Limitation in size means only atomic size, since the medium size for the soul, as it is held by the Jainas, is not quite tenable. (This will be shown in the sequence). Śaṅkara's argument against atomicity of the soul is that the soul, in that case, cannot experience sensation extending all over the body. The contention that due to the connection of the soul with the skin (*viz.* the sense of touch), sensations extend all over the body is not good. When one treads on a thorn, one does not feel the pain all over the body but only in a particular spot, where the skin is pierced by the thorn. Again, if it were contended that sensations can possibly extend over the entire body because intelligence is a quality of the soul, and this intelligence is *not* atomic and that like the light from the lamp, intelligence can spread out from the soul, it is replied that light is not a quality of the lamp, but is a substance in itself. Qualities are coincidental with their substances. Similarly, odour, for example, cannot exist apart from its substance. Moreover, the view that odour itself is only the dispersion of minute atoms, and, thus, is a substance, cannot easily be set aside.

And, for those who hold that intelligence is the very nature of soul, if the intelligence of the soul pervades the whole body, it cannot be atomic. There is no reason why intelligence should not be taken as the very nature of the soul.

The question now is: Why then does the Scripture state the soul to be atomic in size? The soul, though infinite, is yet bound up with the qualities like desire and aversion, pleasure and pain which in fact belong to mind (*buddhi*) during the state of transmigratory existence. The *Śvetāśvatara* passage makes it clear: 'That living soul is to be known as part of the hundredth part of the point of a hair, divided a hundred times, and yet it is to be infinite' (V, 9). Here the conditioned existence of the soul when it is said to be atomic due to super-imposition of the qualities of *buddhi* etc., on it, is first stated and then its true nature of infinity is revealed. So atomicity is only apparent, while infinity is real. Intelligence pervading the entire body is only the *buddhi* pervading the entire body. The *Kauṣītaki* passage; 'Having by knowledge taken possession of the whole body' (III, 6), must be taken to mean that the soul takes possession of the body through *buddhi* and does not mean that there is a difference between the soul and knowledge. Or else, the expression is only a metaphorical one as when one speaks of the '*body*' of a stone where the '*body*' itself is the stone and there is no stone apart from the body.

The references in Scripture to passing out, going and returning do not connote the soul in its essential nature, but only its adjuncts like the *buddhi*. The soul neither goes, nor comes.

Self Cannot be of a Limited Size

The Jaina doctrine that the soul is of the same size as the body it happens to occupy, in any birth, is not considered to be satisfactory on the ground that this concept would mean the contraction and expansion of the soul which will render it unstable and impermanent. The analogy of the stream being permanent while the waters of the stream change will be suitable only to a nihilist viewpoint which is not desirable. Even the Jainas admit the permanency of the final size of the soul when it is released. It follows from this that the initial and intermediary sizes also like the final one must be permanent. This will entail the position that all three sizes are equally the permanent sizes of the soul. Then it is not known how the contraction and expansion of the soul takes place when it enters smaller or bigger bodies. So the size of the soul cannot be mutable and limited. It can only be infinite.

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THE SOUL AND AGENCY

The soul is not an agent in its essential nature. If it were an agent, then liberation will for ever be impossible, for, the soul can never get rid of its agency. Agency, which implies actions, is always painful just as fire is always hot. If it is said that just as fire, without fuel, does not burn, so the soul can abstain from action, it is replied that total abstinence from action, so long as there is association with the limiting adjuncts like *buddhi*, is practically impossible. It cannot be said that actions of such a nature that lead to release can be performed by the soul. For, whatever is secured by actions will not be permanent. Moreover, the Scripture declares that release is attained only by instruction on the true nature of the self, which is pure, free intelligence. This instruction will not be possible if agency were part of the true nature of the self. Self is described as 'Thinking, as it were', 'Moving, as it were' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV. 3. 7) and not really doing so. Again, '(The Self) in union with the body, senses and mind is called the enjoyer by wise people' (*Kaṭha*: I. 3. 4). It is obvious then that the Śruti intends the self to be an agent only as associated with mind and sense organs and not in itself. The example of the carpenter is given here: So long as the carpenter is engaged in his bread-winning activity with his tools, he experiences pain, but once he has done the job and is free to go to join his family, he is joyous. Similarly the self, so long as it is involved in the wearisome cycle of actions feels pain. But once it is free from nescience it is all Joy. The falcon flying in the air is tired and comes to rest. Then it is happy. So is the self. In the example of the carpenter, he is an agent only in so far as he uses his instruments in work, but not with regard to his body. Similarly, the self appears to be an agent only so long as there is nescience or *avidyā*, whose products are mind etc. In itself it is eternally free.

If the argument is, that certain passages in the Scripture do speak of the self as an agent of actions, it is replied that these passages do not propose to establish the self as an agent but presuppose that agency falsely imagined somehow, and prescribe actions accordingly. On the contrary, there are many passages in the Scripture that do deny agency to the self and speak of it as free.

MATERIALIST REFUTED

The materialist believes that consciousness is only the quality of the body. That this is wrong is obvious from the fact that after a person is dead, there is no consciousness, though the body is there. The materialist admits that the knower is different from the known. The body which is known, he should admit, is different from the knower. If consciousness were the quality of elements, it could cognize the body. It is contradictory that anything should act on itself. Fire does not burn itself. And though the body undergoes changes, consciousness continues to be the same and is capable of recognition as 'I saw this'. That the body is invariably associated with consciousness does not show that the latter is a quality of the former. Light and other auxiliaries are needed for any cognitive consciousness. From this it does not follow that cognitive consciousness is a quality of light etc. Moreover, the body is not a necessary auxiliary of consciousness for, in dream, consciousness is operative when the body is inactive. From all this, the soul is known to be different from the body.

THE SOUL IS DEPENDENT ON THE LORD

The soul, thus blinded by nescience, is dependent on God's grace for its release. It is true that God's control over human actions is not apparent in ordinary experience. Human actions have human motives for their immediate causes. All the same, God is the causal agent in all activity. As the *Śata-patha-brāhmaṇa* states: 'He who dwelling within the self pulls the self within' (XIV, 6, 7, 30). It is the Lord who leads the soul to higher status through good deeds, or to lower levels through bad deeds.

This does not, however, mean that the Lord is sometimes cruel and unjust and sometimes kind and merciful quite arbitrarily, or that the soul reaps the consequences of the actions that it has not done. The Lord distributes the fruits of actions to people as they deserve. He acts as an occasional cause. The

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example of rain will illustrate what happens here. Rain constitutes the common cause of shrubs, bushes etc., which have different foliage and fruits and flowers. Similarly, the Lord only provides the favourable or the unfavourable circumstances for the souls according to their former efforts. The soul it is, that specifically acts, though it is the Lord who generally causes it to act. It is the soul that is addressed in all the injunctions and prohibitions of the Vedas, and not God. Moral responsibility is the soul's while the power of fixing the responsibility and evaluating it is God's own.

The Soul is a 'Part' of the Lord

The relation between the Lord and the soul is not that of master and servant, but that of the part and the whole. However, Śaṅkara adds that being part here is only figurative, for, Lord cannot have parts in the literal sense. This is in accordance with the Scriptural declarations. A certain *śākhā* of the Atharva Veda has a *brahma-sūktu* which says: 'Brahman the fishermen; Brahman the slaves; Brahman these gamblers.' This means that as everything is Brahman, there cannot literally be a part-whole relationship between the soul and Lord. The *Śvetāśvatara* says: 'Thou art woman; thou art man; Thou art youth; Thou art maiden; Thou as an old man totterest along on the staff; Thou art born with thy face turned everywhere.' (IV.3). Non-different intelligence belongs to the soul and the Lord alike, as heat belongs to the sparks as well as to the fire. Only in this sense, the soul is part of the Lord.

It may be objected here that if the soul were a part of the Lord, the Lord will be subject to the pain of *saṁsāra*. This is not so because even the so-called pain that the soul is supposed to feel is not real but only apparent resulting from the mistaken superimposition of the mind, body and the senses on the self which is eternally free. This is obvious from the fact that a person feels pain not only when a part of his body is injured, but also when his dear and near ones get afflicted with some pain as though it has afflicted *him*. If in a gathering of ordinary men and saints somebody cries out suddenly 'The son is dead', the ordinary men get flurried but the saints remain unaffected. All this shows that perfect discriminating knowledge is useful even in ordinary life; how much more so should it be in the case of the omniscient Lord! Where then is the question of pain to the Lord? One can as well imagine that the sun trembles when its reflection in the cup of water is disturbed; or that light is straight or bent when objects limiting it are straight or bent. The *Muṇḍaka* text brings out the truth thus: 'One of them eats the sweet fruit; the other looks on without eating' (III. 1. 1.). The *Kaṭha* states: 'The one self within all things is never contaminated by the misery of the world, being himself without' (II. 5. 11).

Reflections are Many

The individual soul is only a reflection of the highest Self. There are as many souls as there are reflections. The experience of pleasure and pain by one soul does not mean the same experience in other souls. For, the adjuncts are different. The disturbance of one reflected image of the sun does not affect another reflected image. This position of many souls that are reflections of one Self must be sharply distinguished from the position according to which there are many Selves, and not one Self. In this latter case there will certainly result confusion of actions and results.

The Bhagavata View of Soul not Satisfactory

The Bhāgavata doctrine holds that Saṅkarṣaṇa, the individual soul, originates from Vāsudeva, the highest self. But the soul that has origination will be impermanent and all the imperfections of the originated things will attach to it. Even release consisting in reaching the highest being will be rendered impossible. Nor is the doctrine of the Bhāgavatas that Pradyumna (mind) originates from the soul satisfactory because it is nowhere observed that an instrument is produced from the workman. And mind is an instrument.

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Soul at the Time of Departure

On departing from the body, the soul goes forth enveloped predominantly by water, though other elements also are present in water. These elements form a basis for the vital breath (*Prāṇa*), and organs. The soul goes to other spheres to enjoy the fruits of its actions. Even if it were born as a minor deity it comes back to earth as soon as its good *karmas* are exhausted. As it is not possible to exhaust all the *karmas* in any one birth, the soul always is born with residual *karmas*, which are the cause of a new birth. While good actions lead the soul to the sphere of the Moon, bad ones lead it to world of Yama and the seven hells. After enjoyment in the sphere of the Moon, the soul descends quickly through the air, ether and the rest by means of rain drops. Thence, the soul enters into a state of conjunction with the bodies of plants, which are already animated by other souls. The temporary stay in the plants, for the soul returning from the sphere of the Moon, is thus not for enjoyment of pleasure or pain but is just a stage for passing on into new bodies. However, with regard to evil-doers, they are born as plants etc. and the plants etc., in their case are not merely a sojourn for them before entering into another new body. When the right time arrives, the plant is eaten as food by someone, the soul goes into the food, and through the father enters into the womb of the mother.

The Released Soul

The man of realization gets rid of all good and bad actions, and he does not go to any temporary abodes. He does not have the reason any more to reach any place. He, whose realization is a fact, whose wishes have been fulfilled, in whom the potentiality of all suffering is already destroyed, has nothing to look for but the dissolution of the body which is the result of the *prārabdha-karma*. If one wants to reach some village, he has to take a road leading to that village. But when one wants to be cured of a sickness, what he wants is medicine, and no movement is required. The realized soul does not go anywhere.

Certain souls, however, who have realized, yet might be appointed by the Lord to fulfil certain duties for the sake of the world and their *prarabdha-karmas*, still unexhausted, may be utilized for their embodiment. *Apāntarātmas* is a case in point. These souls are, of course, free to move from one body to another at will and will be able to remember their identity and individuality whatever may be the bodies they occupy. Sulabhā, a realized soul, entered deliberately the body of Janaka to carry on a discussion with him.

The worshippers of Saguṇa-Brahman, who practise the *Upāsanas* and *Vidyās*, go along the path of the gods, *devayāna* but do not however return to birth. The completely realized soul with Brahman-intuition has no need of a path. His *prāṇas* do not depart from the body (see *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*: III. 2. 11), but then and there merge once and for all. The bodily organs and elements of the realized soul of the worshipper of the Saguṇa-Brahman along with the organs comes to the heart. The heart is illumined, the passage of departure is lit up. The soul passes out through the *suṣumnānāḍī*, follows the rays of the sun whether it is night or day or whether it is *Dakṣiṇāyana* or *Uttarāyaṇa*, and guided by deities goes to Brahma-loka. From here, this soul gets its Brahman-intuition *brahma-sākṣātkāra* in due course. This is what is known as 'gradual liberation' (*Krama-mukti*). However, it is not all worshippers of Saguṇa-Brahman that go to Brahma-loka. Those who worship Brahman in the form of any symbol do not go there but secure results according to the nature of symbols used in meditation. The soul getting release through the worship of Saguṇa-Brahman and residing in Brahma-loka can create bodies for itself by mere will. In fact, it has all the lordly powers except the power of creation. Both the realized souls and worshippers of Saguṇa-Brahman alike do not return to birth. A well-known verse attributed to Śaṅkara summarizes the nature of the soul, world and reality thus: *ślokārdhena pravakṣyāmi yaduktaṁ granthakoṭiṣu; brahma satyaṁ jagan-mithyā jīvo brahmaiva nā'paraḥ.*

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DREAMS AND THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

[Swami Shraddhananda, a former Editor of *Udbodhan*, the Bengali monthly of the Ramakrishna Order, is now an Assistant Minister at the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco. Dreams their significance and value in spiritual life forms the theme of his article.—*Ed.*]

If a devotee of God some day sees in a dream the living form of his Iṣṭa Devatā (Chosen Deity) or finds himself in the company of holy men, listening to their spiritual discourses or serving them, he certainly considers himself blessed. He cannot brush away that dream as a figment of his imagination. Even though the experiences in the dream are not valid after he wakes up, they undoubtedly leave a profound impression on his mind. No wonder then, that spiritual aspirants sometimes look forward to dream to bring them supernatural experiences not otherwise available. We need not drastically discourage this attitude of short-cut reach for spiritual satisfaction, because any experience that helps the harmony in and calmness of the mind is valuable. But at the same time we should not feel shy to assert that the contribution to our spiritual life does not primarily consist in the chance visions or ecstasies we might come upon in the dream state. The importance of dreams lies rather in the fact that they supply very helpful data for exploring the nature of reality. If we can rightly grasp the characteristics of the dream state, if we can consistently apply the findings of that state to waking and if finally we can probe into the background of the dream phenomena, we shall be in the way of understanding the spiritual mystery of the universe itself. The wisdom, that unravels the riddle of life and fulfils the meaning and purpose of our existence, depends largely on that understanding. The seeker of self-knowledge cannot, therefore, ignore the study of dreams.

Let us now try to put down one by one the main features of the dream state. We have to scrutinize these characteristics ourselves as impartially as possible. The field of investigation is our own experience. The conclusions we draw should also be in keeping with our own observations and reason.

Dream Events Are Exceedingly Rapid

Right after waking if we try to recall our dreams we are bound to be amazed to find how many widely divergent things happened within a short compass of time, how many people we met, how many places we visited, how many problems we tackled. If dreams can be compared to a show, we cannot but admit that the master of ceremonies for that show is really an adept in crowding endless programmes in a single night's performance!

In the Dream State Everything is Quite Normal However Absurd or Ridiculous the Objects and Actions May Appear to Us When We Wake Up

Dream experiences are perfectly valid to the dreamer. As long as he is dreaming he does not raise a single question or doubt about the occurrences. The incongruities are detected only when he returns to waking. Time, space and causal relations in the dream-world are completely cogent in the frame work of that world. The dream-world is, as it were, another waking world of solid facts. When we look back at the dream-events from the waking state we marvel at the unthinkable ways in which irreconcilable parts were juxtaposed into a meaningful structure. Some materials were gathered from our waking life but quite a few were manufactured by our imagination. Sometimes the creations are so original that it is hard to believe them to have sprung up from our own familiar mind.

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The Sense of Reality in Dream is as Vivid as in Waking

Every one of us knows the difference between a real object and its mental picture. Any moment we can form in our mind an idea of a bird but that does not bring a bird in flesh and blood. We never attach a sense of reality to the idea of a bird. But in the dream state even though the objects are merely mental images they are invested with a sense of reality. What lends reality to the otherwise etherial figments of the mind is a pertinent question. We shall find the answer later.

As in Waking, in Dream too We Have Two Worlds: The External and the Internal

In the waking state we have to deal with only one mind, namely, our well-known waking mind. But when we study the dream state we are confronted with two minds. First the mind that has produced the dream-person and his environment and second the mind-within-mind, that is to say, the mind of the dream-person. In dream also we think, judge, feel, decide and so on. These take place in the second mind which evidently is a projection of the first mind. Owing to the existence of this second mind the dreamer naturally divides his world into two segments — the external and the internal, just as the waking man lives in two worlds. The difference in the two cases is plain — whereas in waking the external world is not the creation of the observer, in dream it is.

The Dream State Is A Brilliant Example Of Unity In Diversity

We know that everything we see in dream is made of mind. There may be infinite varieties of objects but essentially they are one substance — mind. The gross and the fine, the perceptual and the mental, the far and the near — all are unified in that basic material — mind.

An appraisal of the dream state is possible for us because we can stand outside it in our waking. If we had some way of standing outside waking, probably we could have grasped some of its striking characteristics which ordinarily elude our understanding. We cannot properly analyze and evaluate the facts when we ourselves are mixed up with them. The only thing we can do under the circumstances is to wait for those rare moments when our mind is comparatively free from its pressing and distracting preoccupations and is in a sort of detached mood. Then it is that we have to place the features of the dream state by the side of our waking experiences. If we can do this without prejudice or bias, it may occur to us that our waking life is a kind of dream — a 'long dream' as a great poet has expressed it. The same quick succession of events, the same order and consistency on the surface but colossal abnormalities and contradictions when we observe a little keenly; the same intense sense of reality when we are involved in the happenings, but the sense of reality diminishing more and more and eventually vanishing as the present is thrust into the past and todays become yesterdays. The stubborn fact of the tangible external world cannot cut off this parallelism, because in dream too we see an external world. The unity of all dream manifestations may serve as a pointer to the possible truth that waking diversities too are unified in some cosmic principle higher than matter or energy or even mind.

Many great minds belonging to different times and different corners of the world have intuitively felt the resemblance of the waking to the dream. If we are reluctant to accept their thinking it is because we have taken the world for granted and have not observed its features dispassionately. Our boast of rationality and reason has miserably betrayed us in the matter of this important investigation.

What spiritual purpose is served by the conviction that the world is a dream? It is the great objective of finding the Eternal at the back of the changing phenomena. We cannot go simultaneously towards the north and the south. Only by giving up our attachment to the multifarious allurements of senses can we comprehend what is supersensuous. This giving up becomes easy and natural when we know for certain that what

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we are so madly running after are truly speaking phantoms.

Great spiritual teachers have all been emphatic about this point. Says the teacher of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* : 'There is One who is the eternal reality among evanescent objects. ... Eternal peace belongs to the wise, who perceive Him within themselves — not to others.' (*Kaṭha Up.*, 2.2.13)

In the *Bhagavad Gīta* we read : 'The man of self-control moving among objects with his senses under restraint, and free from attachment and hate, attains serenity of mind.' (2/64)

In many places in the Bible we find the emphasis on the Eternal. For example —

'Before the mountains were brought forth, or even thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God. ... For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.' (Psalm 90)

'And the world passeth away, and the lust there of. ... Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. ... For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.' (I John 15-17)

In a mood of deep spiritual understanding Saint Teresa sang :

'Let nothing disturb thee
Nothing affright thee
All things are passing
God never changes.'

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* compares the soul of man to a fish living in a river and the waking and dream states as the two banks of the river. The fish at random swims alternately to both the banks but it does not belong to either. The river is its home. Similarly the soul of man encounters the two states of experience but it is never a part of them. Its true nature is untouched by the ephemeral qualities of either dream or waking.

If a person keeps a record of his dreams from day to day and also a journal of his daily waking life and if he reads these two accounts, side by side, after a few years he will be in a position to see that so far as he is concerned both the series of events have the same value. Both are past shadows. No doubt they were real in their respective contexts at one time, but as days rolled by the real phenomena faded into unsubstantial time-scars. He might then feel that at no time was he really related to the two states. Indeed as a fish his destiny does not depend on the banks. He belongs to the deep waters of the Spirit. He is the immortal Self. Waking and dream are mere projections of the Self.

What gives the sense of reality to dream objects and events ? The unequivocal answer of the Upaniṣads is : that which lends reality to waking phenomena, namely, the true Self of man — Ātman is existence and consciousness *per se*. In one context Ātman projects the waking world and in another the dream. Spiritual wisdom is to maintain an attitude of detachment to both like the Jñāni farmer, of Sri Ramakrishna's parable, who did not express grief when his only son Hāru died, because he was at a loss to decide whether to weep for this one son of the waking state or for the eight princely sons he had in his dream, just the previous night.

If we are seeking God through the path of devotion or our true Self through the practice of reflective analysis (*vichāra*), in any case, we have to anchor our spiritual efforts in renunciation. Analysis of our waking with the help of the data obtained from the dream state serves to put our renunciation on a stable foundation. Reality misunderstood is a ghost ; when truly comprehended it is the highest truth.

It is a mistake to believe that our waking mind is the creator of the dream state. No doubt waking *samskāras* (impressions) are partly the material of the dream phenomena but the magnificently ordered superstructure could never have been planned and accomplished by the limited faculties of our waking mind. A far greater power is needed. That power is our true Self — Ātman — the birthless and deathless consciousness which is the ground of all phenomena. Ātman projects the waking ; Ātman projects the dream state. We can call the Ātman, the Cosmic

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mind if we like. We can also call him God if we want to retain a time-old religious concept.

If unity is the goal of spiritual search that unity has to be sought in the Self. Ātman is everything; Ātman pervades all and penetrates everything. How to grasp this even intellectually? Here again a reference to the dream state is of signal value. Just as the infinite varieties of dream experiences are all spun out of a single material, namely mind, in the same way the manifold waking world is at all times unified in its basic source, Ātman.

Dream then touches our spiritual life significantly. It loosens the strong fetters of our waking attachments. It gives us a clue to the Eternal behind the ephemeral. It helps to establish harmony in a seemingly distracting and discordant universe.

THE MORAL IDEAL

P. S. SASTRI

[Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., is the Head of the Department of English, Nagpur University. The idea of moral law leading to self-perfection forms the theme of this paper.—*Ed.*]

THEORETICAL reason synthesizes the combination of mental presentations into perceptions, judgments, and Ideas. Practical reason synthesizes by relating the will to a presented content which then becomes an end. This relating Form gives the objects of will. The moral law is the universal and necessary object of the practical reason. This law is distinct from the empirical motives of will and action, for the activity of pure reason in proposing ends to itself appears as a command and takes the form of the imperative. The will is dependent upon and determined by the particular objects and relations of experience when it is directed towards them. But the pure rational will can be determined only through itself. It is necessarily directed towards something other than the natural impulses, i.e. towards duty. As such the predicates of ethical judgment refer to this form of determination of the will; and this form refers to the disposition, not to the act. Hence Kant says that nothing can be called good without qualification except a good will. Morality thus is a disposition which is conformable to duty.

The moral law is not dependent upon any object of will that is already existing since moral action is not a means to an end. The moral law is an absolute command, a categorical imperative, which holds absolutely and unconditionally. Accordingly it is a command which can not contain any empirical element. This law exists for a purpose higher than that of happiness, since the latter gives only a hypothetical imperative which is prudential or practical morality. The practical moral rule makes the will heteronomous in making it depend upon something that is outside itself. The real moral law is that enjoined by Sri Krishna in the Gita: "*yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi sangam tyaktvā dhananjaya.*" This is the law of detached, disinterested work.

The categorical imperative alone expresses the autonomy of the practical reason. This means the pure self-determination of the rational will; i.e. the Form of willing alone is a universally valid law. The will here carries out a law given it by itself, and is therefore autonomous. "Act as if the maxim from which you act were to become through your will a universal law of nature." Instead of impulses, it is maxims that must guide our actions if we want the moral law to legislate universally for all rational beings. This implies the worth of man; and man should do his duty out of reverence for himself. Thus man becomes an end in himself.

The supreme requirement and condition of all morality is the self-determination of the rational will. This gives rise to the idea

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of Freedom with reference to the will, as the fundamental postulate : " thou canst, for thou oughtest ". Freedom is the condition of the possibility of morality. Freedom refers to the supersensuous world, while Reason or necessity concerns itself with the world of phenomena.

The conception of the highest good provides a general band of connection between the two worlds. The sensuous will is directed towards happiness while the ethical will strives towards virtue. Man belongs to both the worlds and his " highest good " therefore must unite virtue and happiness. This is given in the form of a maxim : " virtue alone is worthy of happiness ". Ethical consciousness needs the reality of the highest good ; and it is fulfilled in the reality of the immortal life, and a moral order of the universe, as grounded in God who is the Supreme Reason. Kant leaves us with the dualism of Nature and Morality. The Indian Idealistic tradition from the *Gītā* onwards rejects this dualism. It acts as the unity of the world, the unity of life, conceived in terms of the foundational principle of consciousness. Then the moral law acquires a value.

Kant conceives the categorical imperative (or the unconditionalness of the 'should be') in too formal a way. Instead of finding the moral *a priori* in a " principle of consciousness which makes experience what it is " he tends " to treat it as an absolutely original datum ". Thus he treats of a law without an objective correlative forgetting that a law without an object is nothing. If the law has no content the notion of 'duty for duty's sake' actually becomes a duty to do nothing. To get rid of this abstract duty we must admit the fact that reason permeates all desires. This gives rise to " an object " whose essential feature is its rational character. Reason " constitutes " or " originates " this end as it " originates " the world of knowledge. Thus it is independent of experience *a priori* and unconditioned. It has " objective necessity " while the inclination of the individual's choice has subjective necessity. " Such an object, in its relation to us, constitutes an absolute law." It is that which unconditionally should be. It is unconditional because it is independent of experience, and because it is the presentation by the self of an end to itself. For Kant the spiritual condition as negative is freedom and as positive is the determination by the idea of duty. In reality it is positive as and when it originates in reason and therefore in the self. Hence the third formulation of Kant's moral law — I must be able to regard myself as giving, or as a source of universal law — is taken by many idealists to be the most fundamental one. This alone makes the recognition of the absolute worth of the self possible. If the moral law is originated within the consciousness of man, the rejection of a traditional faith or ideal becomes the rejection of the moral law.

Kant distinguished and separated the " pure self " from the " empirical self " and landed himself into troubled waters. The Indian Idealist admits such a distinction within certain limits and for specific purposes. Even then he identifies the essential nature of these two. Otherwise the way is open to dualism which strikes at the very roots of the moral law. We have therefore to emphasize the unifying function of the self which alone offers the key to all the basic problems of Moral Philosophy. The end of the self which is itself, is personal ; and this personal end is an end that involves this unification. 'Personal' here means the organization of desires which selfhood conditions. But once the organization is achieved, it is no longer personal in an exclusive sense. The striving of the person is towards the impersonal which transmutes the personal. In this sense we hear of the ideal of " loka sangraha ".

Kant accepted that the " moral end " is the end of the rational self. Here Reason is divorced from desire, since our desires being determined by natural necessity are directed towards pleasure. Reason attempts at finding out the ways in which they can be satisfied well. This function is in reality carried out " by the free play of instinct ". And if desire does not enter into the rational end, how do we conceive of the end ? Kant says that " the imperative of duty " can be derived from the principle of " universality of maxim ". Complacently enough Kant speaks of the special worth of the real being,

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of the moral worth of personality. But what is this concept of a "rational being"? What is its nature? Moral worth does not depend on the preservation of a personality but upon the realization of an impersonal reality. We must begin by admitting the interdependence of reason and desire, thus getting rid of the Kantian ethical formalism, and of the ethical dualism of others.

The self is one who is conscious of a world of objects. That is, we *know* that which we desire, for our desires are directed to objects. Some desires are purely human because they do not directly depend on animal susceptibilities at all; they emerge out of a state of things which can be brought about only by self-conscious agents. The inter-relation of the objects brings about the inter-relation of desires and we tend to organize our desires into a system. "No one of them apart from the rest would be what it is." The strongest desire is what we desire on the whole and this is the same as the 'will'. Desire and will are directed to self-satisfaction.

Desire and will get themselves translated into action. The test of all action is life itself, which means that life itself is the end. The true life is the moral life which is discovered and guaranteed by self-reflection through which we become aware of human capacity, human function, and human responsibility. The true good of man lies in the complete realization of these capacities of consciousness. The content of consciousness being knowledge, Reason is *the* 'faculty' of Ethics; and its mode of operation is self-reflection. This reason 'interprets', not 'anticipates', our nature. The method of operation thus is the analysis of the 'given reality' which in ethical investigations is the concrete actual Self as clothed with all the wealth of relations in which it seems to have its being.

In all moral activity a man is an object to himself; and the motive normally lies in the idea of personal good. Man is consciously an object to himself, and is actuated by motives, not by wants. He is actuated by the idea of an end which he presents to himself and endeavours to realize. This end is always personal whence human desires are 'determined by motives'.

Here we should note that a motive is that with which man identifies himself; that it consists in the realization of some object by which the self is presumed to be satisfied; and that the whole man himself is directed towards this realization. And the "act of will" arises only when there is some such definite object. Hence instead of want, it is only the motive that necessarily determines the act. Since this motive lies in the man himself, self-reference is essentially a desire or motive in the proper sense.

The will is the man and it is directed towards the real end which is the final 'Good' or 'Ideal'. This Moral Ideal is a state of well-being; and the well-being we desire is an abiding satisfaction of an abiding self. However, this ideal is spiritual since it consists of the development of spiritual capacities, spiritual character. We can not have as an end that which does not involve the absorption of men in something else. Hence in the final state there can not be the existence of persons. Our ultimate standard of worth is an ideal of *impersonal* worth.

This impersonal Ideal, is also social because it vitalises the social life. Society is the very condition that makes the self active, and that enables the self to develop. The final good is perfection of the soul. But character, which is the first step in this march, is formed in the discharge of social functions or duties. These duties are neither egoistic nor altruistic, but the very true self of each one of us. It is towards this goal that the "good will" endeavours. In such a society of persons, personal character is the one intrinsic value. Character is built up gradually out of the acts of will; and Kant emphasizes this truth in the opening sentence of the *Metaphysic of Morals*: "Nothing can possibly be conceived, in the world or out of it, which can be considered good without qualification except a good will." The will alone can be spoken of as being good. We have to do the right thing because it is *right*. It is right because it makes possible a happy society of persons.

The good will differs from the bad will not in its form, but in the end sought, in the

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idea which is being realized in action. Here we have the "specific difference of the objects willed". But the society of persons cannot be the ultimate end. At the lower level we have to accept such a society and all that it implies because all progress is gradual. This is the principle that led the Advaitins to accept both the Pariṇāma and Vivarta Vādas, though for different levels and contexts. It is at the level of Vivarta that we speak of the will as good because of what it is in itself. It is good because of its own goodness, not because of its content, or the end to which it is directed. This is a formal conception of goodness. At the level of *Pariṇāma,* the will is good in terms of the content that determines its character and direction. This is the level of the ethical life and of the religious consciousness ; and this is a necessary prelude to the other.

The goodness of the good will consists in a definite application to some concrete actuality of life. Thus we can have the "will of the good workman, the good father, the good citizen," not a pure good will devoid of any application. The moral criterion ignores the objective result aimed at, though the result serves a true human interest. But the aiming at this result itself enters into the motive of the agent and thus renders the good will basically good. This good will arises when a man conceives himself in his very nature to be a part or member of a larger whole, and consciously sets before himself the object which is the satisfaction of the self. That is, the good will involves the conception of a permanent satisfaction which can be realized only in a common good. That is, it involves the concept of overcoming man as a means.

The idea of the 'good' is 'formally' the same throughout since it is the same as the idea of self-satisfaction. But it continually changes its content because of the reflective analysis of the modes of life, that arise among men when they strive to realize this idea in action. Moral progress thus appears as the more adequate discharge of duties in "that station of life" in which the individual is placed. Hence we can never say what true good is in its fullness. But we can and do know that it is the spring of progress when we strive towards it ; and we also see through the progress made in what direction it lies. We can thus say that Moral goodness is the good will, and the good will is the will for the good. It is the realization of the moral capability ; and we cannot fully know it till we know its ultimate realization. Ideal virtue then can be defined as self-devoted activity to the perfection of man ; and this perfection is a life of such activity on the part of all persons. In short, perfection means the full realization of the capabilities of the soul which demands that all must partake in this spiritual activity. This object of devotion in our self-devoted activity can be said to constitute the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Man is thus consciously or unconsciously driven to the realization of the whole.

The objects or ends are those that are made or constructed by the self. At the same time we must note that all my ends are my thoughts, but all my thoughts are not my ends.

In the moral sphere it is the desired object (as desired) that appears as my thought. It is not mere thought ; but it is desired by me. In desire, what is desired must in all cases be self. Nothing moves unless it be desired ; and we desire ourself. The object of desire corresponds with some aspect of my character. The objects move us because we feel ourselves asserted or affirmed in them. The essence of desire for an object is the feeling of our affirmation in the idea of something not ourself. It is felt against the feeling of ourself as limited and confined ; and it is the tension of this relation which produces motion.

The actually good is the Absolute and it is realized in varying degrees of satisfaction. And every feature in the universe is absolutely good. This is the starting point of all enquiry into ethical action which believes that self-realization is goodness.

The good is the realized end or completed will. That is, it is an idea that has a content. The idea is carried itself out into reality as it is confined to the sphere of morality.

Self-realization has a meaning only in finite souls. Goodness then is the realization of its idea by a finite soul. It is the idea of

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perfection carried out by a will. It is the willed reality of its perfection by a soul. But perfection is a system and thus inclusive of everything. Neither the form of system by itself, nor any one matter apart from the whole, is perfect or good. Extent and harmony are essential for goodness.

The two aspects of the moral principle are (a) a system of perfection aimed at in oneself, and (b) the subordination of one's own development to a wide-embracing end. These are (a) self-assertion and (b) self-sacrifice. Each is morally good ; and they are the two divergent forms of moral goodness. These two do not differ from one another :

(a) Every permanent end is bound to go beyond the individual.

(b) The content realized is also above him and beyond him.

(c) The private welfare, in so far as man is social, must include to some extent the welfare of others.

They differ not in the contents used, but in the diverse uses which are made of them. If the materials are used for my individual perfection, then my conduct is not self-sacrifice. There is self-sacrifice when the moral end followed brings forth the loss of individual well-being.

But self-sacrifice is a form of self-realization in so far as I attain my personal good. Each realizes the higher Self.

The self we try to realize is not some state of ourself, but a whole. It is not a mere collection of states.

The whole self is present in its states, and therefore the whole self is the object aimed at. This is the meaning of self-realization. Realizing a wider, broader, larger, whole in every act of will.

In willing we do not distinguish a self that wills from one that does not will. But we do distinguish the self, as will in general, from this or that object of desire. And we also identify the two. The will is treated as a whole. Three factors in volition therefore emerge :

(i) The self is above the objects of will. This is the universal factor. (ii) Next there is the particular factor : In order to will, we must will something, identify ourselves with something. Next (iii) there is the unity of the two factors giving the Individual whole or concrete universal. Volition is the identity of both these factors, and the carrying of it out into external existence.

But this unity or identity of the two factors transforms the moral consciousness into religious consciousness. Apart from such a transformation, the moral will has no existence or character because it is itself grounded on the immortality of the soul. At the same time the contradictions inherent in the moral law point to the negation or sublimation of the world of persons into an impersonal Reality.

These come together, but are transcended in the Absolute. They are fragmentary truths and are not ultimately true.

Goodness implies an attempt to realize perfection, for it is the nature of the finite to seek for that which nothing finite can satisfy. But virtue as a form of self-seeking is inconsistent and therefore incomplete. In self-sacrifice the harmony of the individual being is bound to suffer. Both these forms clearly point to the relativity of the good. Neither God nor Reason can harmonize these two as long as they retain their independent and unalterable status.

Morality is the identification of the individual's will with his own idea of perfection. This alone may be said to account for moral responsibility and desert. But (a) the will does something and is characterised by what it does ; (b) this very character of what it does depends on that which is 'given' to it. Is the reward beyond good or bad ? If so there can be no essential connexion between virtue and happiness ; which means that the connexion cannot be moral.

This view ignores the fact that the will has to depend upon natural factors for its acts. Man should not only will what he knows, but do what he wills. Then the knowing brings education as another factor to be reckoned with. The moral act has to depend on that which has been called non-moral. The severance of form and content can give no morality, since there is no essential connexion here between the assertion and the fact. In such a case goodness fails to differ from badness.

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The demands of Morality carry it beyond itself into Religion. Morality finds it essential that every excellence should be good, and hence it cannot bear any divorce of its own world from that of goodness. It demands harmony. But a discord is essential to goodness. Morality thus is led beyond itself into a higher form of goodness called religion.

1. Religion is practical and is dominated by the idea of the good.

2. In Religion the finite self attains its perfection, i.e. the finite self realizes for itself and is aware of perfection, since it is an essential organ of the perfect whole. This perfection implies the passing away beyond the good, since perfection can be attained only by doing one's best, by the union of one's will with the good. As long as this union is absent, so long evil remains. The ideal perfection of the self increases its hostility towards its own imperfection and evil. Religion preserves the degrees and differences in goodness.

3. If the whole is still good, it is not harmonious; and if it has gone beyond goodness, it has carried us also beyond religion. For religion the whole is actually to be good, and at the same time it is actually to make itself good. Its perfect goodness, and its struggle should both be real; and these two aspects cannot be united.

PAIN MUST HAVE A STOP

E. R. MAROZZI

[Mr. E. R. Marozzi, M.A., from Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A., has been in close association with the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement, and is an earnest student of religion.—*Ed.*]

ALTHOUGH the True nature of man as defined by the Upaniṣads is Absolute, Infinite, and has the attributes of pure existence, pure consciousness, and pure joy, we find most commonly that we are neither happy and free from pain, nor secure and free from fear, nor all-knowing and free from ignorance. Ordinarily, when life is miserable and we are racked with pain and feel shruken by oppressions, we could laugh at the idea that there is anything absolute and free about us. Why is this?

Pain is there as an opposite to pleasure and is experienced by the mind of an embodied soul (*jīva*) which is conditioned by desires and ignorance. Pains exist only for him, the individual. For on the Universal level spoken of by the Upaniṣads there is neither pleasure nor pain. By clinging to pleasures and identifying himself with body and mind, the individual (*jīva*) causes a kind of imbalance where he experiences now pleasure and now pain in their full intensity. But on the universal level (Cosmic Mind or God) these two can be said to have neutralized each other so that neither is experienced. Thus during the period of his life when Sri Ramakrishna had the painful throat cancer he said: 'I notice that when my mind is united with God the suffering of the body is left aside.'*

The desires and ignorance which cause the imbalance and individuality have no existence apart from the mind, and the mind again, has no existence apart from the soul (*ātman*) — like waves which are not separate from the ocean although they may each have an individual form. Therefore *jīvahood* — the individualized state with its pleasures and pains — is experienced in mind alone. But mind *per se* is unconscious and unintelligent and derives the attributes of consciousness and intelligence by reflection from the soul which alone is pure consciousness. It is only by conjunction of the mind with the soul that *jīvahood* and pain are experienced. And conjunction occurs due to ignorance of the true nature of the soul

* *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 969.

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— and this in turn brings in its train egoism, attachment, aversion, and attachment to life which are the afflictions (*kleshas*) and the direct cause of pain. These, again, are not to be found in the soul but only in the mind. Each time there is a perception, feeling or thought there is a reaction in the mind like a wave and when the embodied soul (*jīva*) identifies itself with this there arises ego and personality with their inherent desires and aversions. These in turn bring into being the causal chain of karma, and one painful situation is the cause of another.

Two main ways are given for the cure. One is the way of knowledge (*jñāna*) by the practice of discrimination between the true Reality and the apparent one, renunciation of all elements of the apparent reality which he finds to be the non-Self, and by meditation. It is the wilful withdrawal of the reflected consciousness from the mirror of the mind-waves. This results in the disjunction of the true Self or soul from the body-mind mechanism and man abides in his own blissful nature, full of peace and free from pain. Such a mind, deprived of its reflected consciousness, ceases to exist as mind and no longer has any relation to personality or ego. Then the question of pain does not arise, for where there is no ego there can be no pain.

A modification of this method is given in the Upaniṣads and by Patañjali in the *Yoga Sutras,* which consists in the conscious entity — the Self — taking the position of a witness of phenomena and being aware that in any perception, feeling or experience the Reality is not to be found in the experience but in the experiencer, the feeler, and the perceiver. That is, what is seen is not the Real but the seer (the conscious Self) is the Real ; what is heard is not the Real but the hearer is the Real ; what is felt is not the Real but the feeler is the Real ; what is thought is not the Real but the thinker is the Real — He is the witness, the True, the inner controller. Thus there is no involvement in, participation of, or attachment to the experience and neither pleasure nor pain will be experienced as such. The waves of the mind deprived of the power of the Self will subside and cease to be troublesome.

Here the question may arise as to what happens to the pain-bearing *karma* remaining in the mind of one who has accomplished disjunction or the position of a witness? The answer is that this cannot be accomplished until the mind is purged of that kind of *karma.* That is, the impressions of inertia and indolence (*tamas*) and those of selfish action, ambition and violence (*rajas*) must have been removed and only the tranquil (*sāttvic*) condition remains.

Again, we may think that since pain is the result of the accumulated *karma* from the past resulting from the action based upon ignorance and desire, it might be possible for one to create such a *karma* through virtuous and selfless action that eventually one may be free from pain altogether. But pain can at best be only attenuated by this means, for as long as one functions in the body and mind there will remain some kind of pain. There is what Patañjali calls '*guṇa-vṛtti-virodha*' — the interplay and counteraction of the *guṇas*, the forces of nature which now cause pleasure and again cause pain.

The second way to cope with pain is by love and devotion to God (*bhakti*). By directing these feelings to God pain is transformed and sublimated. The mind-waves are identified with God by means of a strong feeling of love for Him in a relationship of mother, father, friend, servant, child or beloved. The mind thus concentrated on God becomes pure and *sāttvic,* and the *tāmasic* and *rājasic* modifications which cause our pains are overpowered and merge in the ruling emotion of love. Not that one does not feel pain any longer, but pain is accepted with good grace (and sometimes with joy) as coming from the Beloved. For God as the all-in-all is not only the creator and preserver of the universe but also the destroyer and He who gives life and brings joy and happiness is also He who brings pain, misery and death. The true devotee receives both opposites with equal love and grace. We often find this standpoint expressed in

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Christian mystical literature. For example, Jean Pierre de Caussade states,

> 'To suffer in sweetness and in peace without offering any resistance is to suffer in the right way ... You are to thank God, as though for a grace, for what you suffer meanly and weakly ... these God-wrought calamities, if rightly viewed, are worth more than all worldly prosperity. For they are over in a moment while their fruits are eternal.' And, writing to a friend, 'When I think of the infinite value of your present tribulations I dare not wish for them to end; what I do wish is that you shall be kept in a continual state of sacrifice and self-abandonment, or at least, that you shall strive after this, yearn for it and unceasingly beseech God for it. When our hearts are thus inclined, our wise employment of tribulations and afflictions advances our eternal welfare more than do successes and consolations.'[1]

Meister Eckhart says,

> We need not fear all the pain and trouble that could come, because it is going to have an end ... We are to be so dead that neither good nor evil affect us ... Life cannot be perfected until it has returned to its secret source, where life is Being, a life the soul receives when it dies down to its roots, so that we may live that life yonder which itself is being.[2]

This is not to imply that one should actually court pain or seek it out, for that would be a kind of morbid and pathological practice. But when pain comes as the inevitable effect of previous *karma* one should be resigned to God — that is, one concentrates the mind on God rather than on the pain or the ego-reaction of depression, frustration, anger, etc. Thus pain is transformed and sublimated. The pains and unhappy circumstances that may come to a man of spiritual knowledge are like events that happen at a distance and do not relate to him, for he has become detached from the vehicles wherein pain inheres — the body and mind. It is as if these were happening to someone else while his true Self within is at peace and is blissful.

It may be that those who have many desires and attachments say that this is a pessimistic viewpoint for it negates all that they hold dear — the empirical self and the phenomenal world of *māyā*. And the doctrine of *karma* makes them responsible for their own limitations and misery, whereas they would rather blame something or someone else — the family, relatives, the state, country, social, economic, or political systems etc. and they are unfortunate victims of a hapless fate. But *māyā* is an explanation of the status of the phenomenal world just as it is, and *karma* is the law of cause and effect working within it. For the man of wisdom who knows that the Self alone is dear, the māyā viewpoint naturally follows and it is a happy and blissful one, for what it negates is that which is the cause of misery and bondage, i.e. ignorance, desire and attachment. It is stated in the *Panchadaśi*:

> The sufferings of the three bodies (gross, subtle and causal) are caused by the desire of the enjoyer for the objects of enjoyment. These sufferings affect the three bodies, but the Self is not affected by them.
>
> The sufferings of the gross body take the form of disease due to the disequilibrium of the bodily humours; desire and anger and other passions are the sufferings of the subtle body; and the source of the sufferings of both the gross and subtle bodies is the causal body.
>
> When the *jīva* is recognized to be identical with the immutable *Kūṭastha*, the sufferings of the bodies cease to affect him and no experiencer remains.[3]

And also the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* states:

> 'If a man knows the Self as "I am this (Self)", then desiring what and for whose sake will he suffer in the wake of the body?'[4]

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[1] *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*, J. P. de Caussade, pp. 298, 301, 317.

[2] *The Sermons: Being is More Than Life.* Meister Eckhart.

[3] *Panchadasi*, XIV. 8, 9, 11.

[4] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV. 4. 12. The *Panchadasi* devotes an entire chapter (VII) to explaining this sloka.

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One may ask, 'If the sufferings affect the three bodies and not the Self, then is it a matter of stoically bearing the pains or do the pains actually disappear?' The answer is that in some cases the pains disappear or are no longer cognized and in other cases — especially those of the *bhaktas* whose mind is totally given up to God — pains may be transformed into joy, as in the instances of some religious martyrs. For example, Blanche Gamond tells of a torture experience:

> ... I was naked from the waist up. They brought a cord with which they tied me to a beam in the kitchen ... then they discharged their fury upon me, exclaiming as they struck me, 'Pray now to your God.' ... but at this moment I received the greatest consolation that I ever received in my life, since I had the honour of being whipped for the name of Christ, and in addition of being crowned with his mercy and consolations. Why can I not write down the inconceivable influences, consolations, and peace which I felt interiorly? To understand them one must pass through the same trial; they were so great that I was ravished, for there where afflictions abound grace is given super-abundantly. In vain the women cried, 'We must double our blows; she does not feel them, for she neither speaks nor cries.' And how should I have cried, since I was swooning with happiness within?[5]

The first method discussed here — that of the *jñāni* — is illustrated by the case of Swami Shivananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the second president of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. Toward the last years of his life his body was racked with several kinds of ailments so that he could walk only a few steps at a time. Yet when he was asked, 'How are you Maharaj?' He would reply, 'I am fine.' On being further told that his body seemed to be in bad condition, he would reply, 'Oh, you are asking about the body? The body is not at all well, but I am fine. Talking about God with people ... I am in excellent spirits ... pain and anguish belong to the body. He who dwells within the body is not affected by them — He is Bliss itself. I am not the body. I am that Eternal Supreme Being, ever pure, illumined and free. The Master has given me that knowledge in the fullest measure. That is why it does not make any difference whether the body is well, or sick or old.'[6]

Thus, any given experience can be painful to one, indifferent to another and joyous to a third, depending on how much spiritual knowledge and/or love of God has been attained. *Vṛttis* — waves in the mind — are like reflecting surfaces for the soul and are of three kinds: *tāmasic, rājasic* and *sāttvic*. In the first the reflection is most obscured and the image is barely seen. In the second the reflection is clearer but the image is distorted so that we mistake it for what it is not. In the third, the *sāttvic*, the reflection is clear so that we see the image properly, but it is at best a reflected image and not the Real thing (*svarūpa*). The wise man recognizes these as reflected images in his mind and is not deceived by them. He knows that they have no relation to him and belong only to nature. Therefore, whatever their condition, he is free from their effects. Having withdrawn his consciousness from all the *vṛttis*, the reflections disappear and merge into their source, the Divine Self. There remains no one to experience pain, for the Self is only Joy.

> *Dehābhimāne galite, vijñāte paramātmani*
> *Yatra yatra mano yāti tatra tatra samādhayaḥ.*

With the disappearance of attachment to the body and with the realization of the Supreme Self, to whatever object the mind is directed one experiences *samādhi*.[7]

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[5] *Deux Heroines de la Foi*, Claparde et Goty. p. 112.

[6] *For Seekers of God*, trans. by Swami Vividishananda, pp. 189, 196-7.

[7] Quoted in foreword to *Drig-Drisya Viveka*, by V. Subrahmanya Iyer, p. x.

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TRADITION AND PROGRESS

SARASVATI CHENNAKESAVAN

[Dr. Mrs. Sarasvati Chennakesavan, M.A., Ph.D., is Reader in Philosophy, in the Venkateswara University. This article forms the text of a paper read by her at a Seminar at the Advance Centre of Philosophy, University of Madras.—*Ed.*]

A FRIEND playfully defined progress as the desire to be at a place where we are not already. This means that progress is always towards the achievement of a goal. Such a goal can never be a fixed goal, for then progress will come to an end as soon as that goal is attained. If progress becomes limited thus in terms of its goal, then it can not be progress, for we have an idea that progress means the ever-marching into an unknown future. That is, there can be no one definite goal for progress. There can only be a series of ever receding goals, each one subsuming and being subsumed by successive ideals. In the light of this, tradition cannot be in opposition to progress, because what is a progressive idea today becomes a past tradition for tomorrow. Hence, the implied contradiction between the two is meaningless. But at the same time, the paradox is such that unless there is an inherent and implied contradiction between these two, there can not be a further progress.

Tradition may be interpreted in two ways. We may say that tradition is that which forms the framework, the cultural backbone, the religious ideals on which the changing patterns of human behaviour weave their existence. In this meaning, the permanent parameters of the behavioural pattern are set and progress when within these parameters becomes a contradiction in terms. On the other hand, tradition can mean the customs and mores of a people which are reflected in the behaviour of those people and whose exemplary form is to be obtained in the activities of her good people. In this meaning it has more a sociological implication and relates to the socio-ethical progress. Thus tradition can refer to ethico-religious ideas and progress refers to socio-economic structure. Both these are grounded, in turn, in the knowledge which man possesses about the nature of reality. Hence there has to be a link-up between these two. An ethico-religious tradition can ill afford to neglect the truths that are revealed by a scientific enquiry. Similarly, it is a known fact that the changes in a socio-economic structure are directly proportional to the technical applications of the findings of a scientific enquiry. A harmonious society is that where these two travel *pari passu*. It is also a truism that a more comfortable and leisurely socio-economic pattern of living leads to a more rational assessment of the ethico-religious ideals in the light of scientific truths. Such an assessment constitutes progress.

It is usually maintained that the nature of an ethico-religious idea is such, that a rational assessment of it is neither necessary nor possible. This is so because they are either revealed truths whose final authenticity is thus established or that they are the sayings of mystics which are self-evident and thus are not in need of the support of reason. At best this opinion is dogmatic and requires implicit faith on the part of man. For such a man there is always the struggle between his social, economic life and religious beliefs. There is no denying this if we believe that ethico-religious ideas serve their purpose best when they guide man in all aspects of his life. It is not possible to be a religious individual at certain times, say on a Friday or a Saturday, and a worldly wise person on the rest of the days of the week. Therein lies the path for schizophrenia. In the light of the above difficulties it is necessary to examine whether a tradition can afford to ignore scientific de-

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velopments and also whether a change can be entirely non-traditional.

Such a discussion would be fruitful only when we start with the pre-requisite condition that tradition is changeable. If we are to maintain that tradition is the unwritten and the unbreakable law which demands our adherence purely based on unenquiring faith, then there can be no discussion at all, for then there can be no meeting point.

In our country tradition is understood as *sampradāya*. It is that which is exemplified in the good conduct (*sadācāra*) of trustworthy persons who are also well-versed in the Śrutis or Scriptures. But such a tradition is neither authoritative nor categorical. It is there for us to ponder upon and awaits our rational acceptance. Dr. Radhakrishnan, in his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* maintains that even mystical experience of the reality of God may have to be further established and ratified at the bar of reason, if we are to benefit by it (page 16). Hence the *sacredness* of tradition is untenable. It is a fallacious argument to maintain that tradition is the embodiment of all that is good, just because it is tradition. Even according to our Scriptures this forms only a starting point. After listening (Śravaṇa) to the words of an authoritative person, the scriptures require that we think and discuss (*manana*) about it before translating it into experience (*nididhyāsana*). Hence there can be no contradiction between tradition and reason.

Tradition, therefore, cannot be conservative. If tradition claims to be a facet of truth, then such a tradition can never be also a dogma. It requires to be continually recreated, renewed and retransmitted in terms of whatever knowledge a man might possess at any particular level of his evolution. When this does not happen, tradition has already become fossilised and petrified. By the continuous use of reason, we perceive truth in a more and more effective manner and thus keep tradition ever evolving.

If such a tradition is to be a worthwhile thing in the lives of men, it must take a very serious note of the vast changes that take place in the progress of knowledge from generation to generation. Each generation has its problems and posers which are indelibly stamped in their attitudes to things and ideas. Every age has a particular problem and the people of that age adapt their view in terms of the answers they find scientifically for their problems. Such answers and attitudes have to become part and parcel of a tradition if such a tradition is not to become a dead tradition.

However, mere sequence of any two events does not constitute change. It is only when such sequence is also aimed towards a goal, that it constitutes change or progress. That is, in progress, we never leave the past completely behind nor is there a complete reproduction of the past. When something new emerges which takes us in the direction of a desired goal and which is yet not a complete break off from the old, then we have progress. In the light of this, two important facts emerge. We have to define our goal and we have to understand the nature of our past. It is only then that we can see the past emerging as an idea in the light of our goal.

Evidently, the goal of all human life, empirically speaking, is material well-being and spiritual solidarity. Material well-being is closely linked up with standards of life which are obtainable by the use of technical skills. Spiritual solidarity is linked with a value-determination of such standards of life. But unfortunately such technical skills and the ease with which it has been made possible for man to control nature, and the resultant leisure, have tended to make man forget his spiritual responsibilities. He forgets that man does not live by bread alone. The very felicity which is acquired through material welfare tends to make man sceptical of the importance of spiritual values in one's life. It is then that tradition becomes a millstone round his neck. But actually this need not be so.

The faith, that new ideas themselves are responsible for change and progress, seems to have developed along with the idea that scientific success alone leads to a better living. It is not so. Ideas by themselves can change nothing. Perhaps they provide a stimulus and/or a tool for achieving a desirable status in life. Hence fresh discoveries of the

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nature of reality, does not usually bring about a change in the attitude of man towards life. Before an idea can effectively mould a people's life, it has to pass through many changes. The first stage is the discovery of truth. A scientist is one who is dedicated to the discovery of truth. But the field of such dedication is always limited, and his task is done when he probes his limited field and lays bare its fundamental truths. He is not interested in social and economic implications of his discoveries. This is the world of the technologists and social scientists. These people are not satisfied by knowledge for its own sake, but are more interested in finding out how such knowledge can help mankind in their progress towards perfection. It is here that a definition of perfection becomes essential. When man reaches that stage where he attains a fullness of his stature, where he realizes and understands his own nature, then he becomes a perfect man. This is where the philosopher takes over. By theorising about the possibility of such a perfection, and the possible forms such a perfection can take, the philosopher provides a relevant value for the various steps. Since tradition, as we know of it, embodies such an effort by philosophers and wisemen, it should not be in contradiction with progress. Material welfare, scientific discoveries, technological applications, sociological evaluations — all have their place in making man understand the goal and purpose of his life. When such an infusion of ideals is absent from a technological endeavour, when the scientist is not fired by the enthusiasm to find and make a perfect society, then tradition might get blamed for it. When man's moral and ethical ideals do not grow *pari passu* with his science and technology, then that society would be a morally bankrupt society. Equally difficult situations are possible when moral and ethical ideals alone are given undue stress to the detriment of the economic well-being and physical contentment of man. In such a society not only will there be poverty, but also the more serious disaster of moral bankruptcy would be the consequential effect. This may seem to be a paradoxical statement. None the less it is true, because it is only the well cared for body that can house an enquiring mind. Unless there is an enquiring mind there can be neither appreciation of, nor adherence to, any moral ideals.

There is another aspect of this relation between tradition and change that we can ill afford to forget. This is the inter-action between the two and the influence one bears to bring upon another. With increasing knowledge of the external world and its true nature, man begins to adjust his attitudes to them, perhaps, almost imperceptibly in the beginning, but more consciously later on. Thus the one-way-flow of motivation towards material welfare only begins to lag and seek other ways of expressions and fulfilment. When this happens man's progress becomes channelled into the higher ideals of perfection and the achievement of a perfect society. This is what Mahatma Gandhi meant when he talked of Rama Rajya and what the Christians mean when they sing of "Peace on Earth and goodwill to men". It is only when there is no such knowledge to correct and guide our beliefs that man takes shelter under pseudo-tradition and uses it as a cloak to cover his misdeeds. It is not actually tradition on which he takes his stand but that which he would like to be a tradition, so that it may give a necessary cover for his activities. This is equally possible with a scientific knowledge devoid of an ethical background, as it happened under the Nazi rule in Germany. By no stretch of imagination can we say the most modern and scientifically correct killings carried out by the Nazis is progress. Nor can we maintain, equally, that tradition-seeped, dogmatic and blind attitudes of a people who believed in Sati a century back in India is good tradition. Both are one-sided and as such there is no actual progress, although sometimes there may be a semblance of it. It is only when one infuses and guides the other in its search for truth that there can be real progress.

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SANKARA AND MASTER ECKHART

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

[Swami Nityabodhananda, an ex-Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*, is now the Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center, Geneva, Switzerland. In this article he presents the thoughts of the two great masters who lived far apart in time and place, i.e. Śankara and Master Eckhart, a German mystic, but spoke almost in identical terms.—*Ed.*]

ŚANKARA and Master Eckhart though separated by distance and centuries show such remarkable similarity of thought and spiritual insight that one is tempted to put them side by side and admire them. Both, typical products of their respective cultures and countries, in turn influenced and still influence the thought and life of their peoples. A Hindu thrills at the name of Śankara and his marvellous personality and achievements ; for Śankara was not simply a philosopher, but a man of realization, a dynamo of spirituality. So also was Master Eckhart. His words come from inner spiritual certitude and carry with them the power of transformation. I am tempted to call his sermons and tracts, not sermons and tracts, but Eckhart Upaniṣad. Upaniṣad in Sanskrit means the intimate teaching of a Guru to a disciple ; it means also the teaching that destroys ignorance. His sermons satisfy both these definitions remarkably.

Though Śankara, like other traditional thinkers uses theological arguments, he gives primacy of place and the prestige of a supreme court to philosophy. He claims for his views not only the authority of the scriptures — which a theologian does — but reasonableness and direct experience. These two are essentials in philosophy and these are the strong points in Śankara's thought. Logical or inferential arguments cannot disclose to us the nature of Reality. Only direct experience can bring us into contact with it. Reality is an object of intuition, not of inference, says Śankara. And that which is the object of intuition cannot be a metaphysical concept ; it is spiritual being. Reality as spiritual being is the centre of Śankara's philosophy and this reality is our very self. In this approach God and theological arguments are left behind. In Eckhart also is evident a constant effort to liberate himself from theology and arrive at the philosophy of Being.

Eckhart shows himself as a true product of the Medieval Christian philosophy which asserts the identity of essence and existence in God, who is just the pure act of existing. See how he drives home the idea : 'Meditate well on the words of our Lord : "I am the light of the world" "I am" ; by these words He touches being. The Masters teach us that creatures can well say, "I", but the word "am" can be pronounced in reality only by God.' Says he : 'A stone, to the extent it has Being, would be better than even God and the Godhead without Being (supposing that God could be tracted from Being).' What a bold statement from one who is acknowledged as a great theologian of the Middle Ages.

Again, 'God made all things through me when I had my existence in the unfathomable ground of God. Does the soul know God in the creatures, that is merely the evening light ? Does she know creatures in God, that is morning light ? But does the soul know God as He who alone is Being, that is the light of midday ? Man should be so poor that he is not and has not a place for God to act in. To reserve a place would be to maintain distinctions. Therefore I pray God that he may quit me of god, for (his) unconditioned being is above God and all distinctions. It was here (in unconditioned being) that I was myself, wanted myself, and knew myself to be this person and therefore, I am my own first cause....In my eternal birth, however, everything was begotten. I was my own first cause as well as the first cause of everything else'. What

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bold statements from a theologian of the Middle Ages. We find Master Eckhart here giving pure and unmitigated Advaita when he speaks of the eternal 'I' as the cause of all phenomena.

Let us go into Śankara's conception of being. In his commentary on the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Śankara says 'those who imagine that the Ultimate Reality, free from all determinations, is as good as non-being are under an illusion'. For Śankara Ultimate Reality is plenitude of Being. We can think the whole world away and this we can do thanks to the real which is. Life becomes meaningless without this *a priori* notion of Being. This universe has its roots in Being. It is established in Being. Being is eternal, self-existent, self-evident. It is non-dual, homogeneous and monolithe. It is generous and flexible and by its generosity it assumes various forms in various contexts. When it performs the function of living it is called the vital force, when it speaks, the organ of speech, when it sees the eye, when it hears the ear and when it thinks the mind.

This Being (Sat) is consciousness (*Cit*) and beatitude. According to Śankara Being as pure consciousness fulfils three functions at the same time, of existing (of the simple fact of existing), of being conscious of that existence and of being happy about it. It is Being in the role of the Ātman or Self that carries out these functions. This Ātman which is also Brahman is designated as the Ultimate Reality. Ātman or Self is designated as the subject only as a concession or, for facilitating empirical discourse. We say concession, because Ātman is more than the subject. By designating it as the subject we involve Ātman in a subject-object relation and thus usher it into the world of duality. Ātman, the Self is beyond the subject-object relationship but remaining in its glory of the Beyond it permits the world of relationships. It accepts to fall into the plane of empirical discourse when we discuss it. Being, as pure consciousness, is untouched by hunger and thirst, by sin and death, says Śankara. It is unaffected by the three divisions of time. Thus Being is the centre of Śankara's philosophy, the source and sustenance of his thought.

Being is the centre of Master Eckhart's thought also. 'Being is the property of God. Being is a name above all names. Whatever really is, exists in Being. To be defective is to show a decline in Being. All our lives should reveal Being, and therefore, to the extent that life is Being, it is of God.' Eckhart often identifies God with Being. But then God is not the God of theology. He becomes the Absolute of philosophy. 'The God who dwells in the nothing-at-all that was prior to nothing, in the hidden God-head of pure gnosis whereof no man doest speak.' Then again Master Eckhart says: 'Let a man's life be ever so mean, if he takes it as Being, it will rank higher than anything else life might be. I am very sure that, if a soul knew the least of what Being is, its attention would never be diverted from it even for an instant.' If we reach down into Being pure and simple, as it really is, we should find that Being ranks higher than life and knowledge. 'If the soul knows God in creatures, night falls. If it sees how they have their being in God, morning breaks. But if it sees the Being that is in God himself alone, it is high noon! This is what one ought to desire with mad fervour — that all his life should become Being.' This identity between God and Being which Eckhart makes is very important. There God is above creatures and angels. God is the only light — he uses the word high noon — the only light, namely the light of consciousness — that which illumines and that which is illumined — the subject and object.

For Master Eckhart Being is beyond virtues. The utmost a spirit can attain to in this body is to dwell in a condition beyond the necessity of virtues, where goodness as a whole comes natural to it, when it is virtuous not out of necessity, but of innate good nature. Being is also beyond time and space, beyond name and corporeality. To emphasize the timeless nature of Being Master Eckhart says: 'To say that God created the world yesterday or to-morrow would be foolishness, for God created the world and everything in it in the one present Now. Indeed, time that has been past for a thousand years is as present and near to God as the time that now is. The soul

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that lives in the present Now-moment is the soul in which the Father begets his only begotten Son and in that birth the soul is born again.' How well this compares with Śankara's idea of Being as unaffected by the three measurements of time — past, present and future! For Śankara, the Self, which is Being, makes experiments with time, when it makes and lives a special time in dream and when it goes through the intemporal experience of deep sleep. Just as the eternal Now of Master Eckhart, Śankara insists on the instant or silence between two thoughts as the Reality with which we have to integrate. The interval between two thoughts or two states is the Self itself. Both Śankara and Master Eckhart have taught us methods of integrating with or perceiving this Being. Śankara calls perception of reality, *aparokṣānubhūti*, that is to say, immediate contact with reality without any intermediary. Eckhart also uses the phrase vision without intermediary. 'If you wish to know truth in all its purity, abandon joy and fear, assurance and hope, and all ardent effort. Joy, in fact is nothing but an intermediary ; fear is nothing but an intermediary. So also are assurance, hope and effort. When you are looking at things and things look at you, you do not see God.'

According to Śankara thought cuts up Reality. But we can convert thought into Being by intuition. How to develop intuition? Intuition is reason interiorised. Śankara teaches that the moment we realize that empirical experience is made up of a mixture of two levels of thought, the empirical and transcendental, we are induced to make a rational enquiry. Reason is born. The reason has need to search and feel the realities in the outside world. When reason renounces this need and turns within then intuition is born and intuition is itself reality. It is reason that gives reality to the external world. Vedanta, when it gives objective reality to the world, wants to feed reason before turning it on itself. The objective reality is of the given. It is out there. But Ultimate Reality is not of the given. It is of a different order of being than that of the world. When this conviction comes to reason then it turns within, and intuition is born. It is interesting to recall Eckhart's words: 'Soul has two eyes — one looking inwards and the other outwards. It is the inner eye of the soul that looks into essence and takes being directly from God. That is its true function. The soul's outward eye is directed toward creatures and perceives their external forms but when a person turns inwards and knows God in terms of his own awareness of him, in the roots of his being he is then freed from all creation and is secure in the castle of truth.' The field of relations is a felt world, is something given and Śankara gives it empirical reality. It is very important to remember that Śankara gives empirical reality to the world but affirms that that empirical reality points to a transcendental or non-rational reality: the Reality of Pure Being. This Being is to be discovered in the heart and centre of empirical life.

To feel the world is an empirical necessity, not a metaphysical need. An empirical necessity is not binding on Reality. We can come out of that empirical necessity by discovering our true nature, by getting established in Being, that is what Śankara teaches. When our mind renounces the empirical necessity of feeling the world or having an experience with the conviction that at no time was the mind devoid of it, then all effort vanishes, all thought stops and intuition is born, says Śankara. We need not have to walk a distance and count time to come into Being which is our innermost nature. It is the All, the Totality. Nothing can be added to it or subtracted from it. At every moment it is full and complete.

When we relieve ourselves of that empirical necessity of feeling the world and being in it, then we are one with Being. We make a break-through. 'When I came out of Godhead into multiplicity, all things proclaimed, there is a God, (the personal creator). Now this cannot make me blessed, for hereby I realize myself as creature. But in the breaking through I am more than all creatures. I am neither God nor creature ; I am that which I was and shall remain, now and for ever more. There I receive a thrust which carries me above all angels. By this thrust

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I become so rich that God is not sufficient for me.'

In the above quotation, Eckhart drives home the idea that God and the world of creatures are simultaneous emanations which come into existence at the same time. To think of the one is to think of the other and so we must renounce God to arrive at Being.

In Śankara we find the same idea well developed. He says that God (Īśwara) in His aspect of controller of phenomena, that is Māyin, uses the ignorance or *avidyā* in me and out of that as material cause, evolves this world. The ignorance in me, the Māyā, the *prakṛti* is the material cause. At no time do we have Īśwara without the *jīvas* or the *jīvas* without Īśwara. Ignorance is the condition of the existence of both. Īśwara and *jīvas* are considered the two poles of ignorance and when this polarity is resolved, then ignorance itself is transcended and Brahmanhood fully realized. To say that Īśwara and *jīva* are simultaneous emanations from Brahman, and are mutually determined occurrences, is to give a supreme value to God as creator and then renounce it as a spiritual discipline. That is exactly what Master Eckhart does also.

Before we quit the topic of Being and intuition, we must mention that to fully realize the importance of Being in Śankara and Master Eckhart one must understand it as the Vijnana position which comprehends both the absolute and relative at the same time. There is a pointed reference to this position in Master Eckhart. He says : 'The furthest limit of man's knowledge is an intuition of how the Three Persons: Father, Son and the Holy Ghost enjoy their divine nature. To this none can attain unless his soul is plunged into the consciousness of the created and uncreated natures confluent in her where she stands in the midst and seeing straight into them both.'

The above discussion must bring into bold relief the status of God, world and creature in Śankara and Master Eckhart. God is immanent and not transcendant in both. The moment we give transcendance to God, he becomes Brahman or ultimate Reality in Śankara's thought. World is the field of spiritual endeavour in Śankara in which the duality offers the field for the exercise of moral freedom. It has only relative reality and pragmatic value. It has no status by itself. This is true regarding both thinkers. Creatures in Śankara's thought are reflections of the Reality : As creatures they have no status ; but as potential reals they have a status. In Master Eckhart the distinction is not so sharply drawn.

Śankara gives great importance to the four traditional Vedantic disciplines as the means for developing intuition, as the means for realization. It is well-known that for Śankara discipline has the role of dehypnotising or disintoxicating man of his ignorance. They are : (1) Ability to discriminate between the real and the unreal, (2) freedom from desire for obtaining pleasure or avoiding pain here or hereafter, (3) attainment of calmness, spirit of renunciation, fortitude, power of concentration of mind, faith, and (4) thirst for liberation.

Very much similar to these three disciplines are the three 'purifications' or 'getting out' of which Eckhart speaks :

1. When the soul goes in search of the kingdom of God taking Christ as the model it has to free itself of the essence of the creature, delivered of its link with the creature and of its egoism. This is the first deliverance.

2. The second is delivering the soul of its attachment to the essence of Christ as the eternal archetype. The Masters teach that the archetype of the soul is a divine understanding. It is from this archetype that the soul gets fed of its uncreated essence. Christ in fact is this eternal archetype. The soul cannot abide in him, but must pass through him, as he himself says. This breaking through is the second death of the spirit.

3. The third essence from which the soul is to be freed is the primordial divine nature which manifests as the Father. The masters say that God, the Father, becomes conscious of his nature to the extent to which He is the origin of the eternal Word and of all creatures. God creates all creatures who though in Him, look outside. The soul cannot live and abide in the Father.

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She must leave Him in order to come to herself, to come to the knowledge of herself. It is only thus that she finds the kingdom of God. Here soul is God, soul and Deity become one unity. Here the soul discovers that she is herself the kingdom of God.

The resemblances of philosophical insight and spiritual aspiration which are remarkable between Śankara and Master Eckhart confirm us to be more in the universality of the spirit. There is no East and West in the domain of the Spirit. These are man-made distinctions. These distinctions give place to unity and harmony as man enters the Temple of the spirit and approaches the Sanctum Sanctorum guided by these two Masters.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

ERIC HAMMOND

An ochre-coloured garment robed him round
As, prophet-like, he moved within our mind,
Flooding each seeking soul with that true light
That shone through all earth's ages, and still shines
Above all clouds of creeds and lack of creeds.

His voice, sonorous-sweet, or spoke or sung
Of The Eternal one, the God in Man,
The God of all, in all ; a Fatherhood
Supreme ; Fraternity inviolate
List'ning, men's former foolish fancies fled ;
Their little, feeble thoughts, like bubbles, burst,
Yet, in their bursting, caught, from that fair light
Fresh colour and fresh form.

'Twas thus we learned
How, of infantine images of fear or faith,
To raise an edifice enduring ; strong
As the strength of Him who built the worlds ;
Founded in Him, by Him sustained eternal.

We thank him and we praise him that he brought
Out from the East — whence wisdom wends its way
Into the waiting West, — his loving heart,
Loyal in ev'ry pulse to touch of truth,
In travail for our welfare.

In his face
Serenely steadfast, glowing with the light,
We saw sweet signs of sacred restfulness,
And moveless peace, and measureless content.
Stately he strode by right of rectitude,
Crowned with great grace and charm and dignity
Full princely ; and while humblest hearts he drew
Most haughty spirits to his spell succumbed.

His eyes, anon, flashed with the " scorn of scorn " ;
Anon, in seas of sympathy they swam.
His words melodious stirred the sluggish soul
Into desire to breathe the breath of life ;
His utterance a wid'ning worship woke
Wherefore, for all, we thank him and we praise.

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REST

M. P. PANDIT

[Sri M. P. Pandit of Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondichery, is not unknown to our readers. A linguist and a critic he is also an author of some books. Whether effort or rest is beneficent to man forms the theme of this article.—*Ed.*]

THERE is a good deal of misconception about rest: the necessity of rest, the nature of rest. Men are advised not to work, not to exert themselves continuously but to take a break, short or long as conditions permit, and relax. Many look for the moment of 'retirement' to get what is styled well-earned rest. In all cases the idea is that continous work, ceaseless effort, is weakening and harmful to one's health.

Nothing could be more contrary to the actual truth of the matter. The fact is life is a field for progress, effort, output of energies for effectuation and advancement. As long as one is active in this direction and keeps in the stream of this life-current in motion, one grows, one is carried in the general momentum. He gets the required energy from Nature. The Mother says that the energy one receives from Nature is, as a rule, in exact correspondence to the effort that one is putting forth. The more you work, the more you are filled with the life-strength. But should you suspend the effort, for any reason, then there is no need for the energy and the law of Nature comes into operation; there is less supply of life-force and the growth slackens. That is the beginning of decay, disintegration.

If, however, by rest is meant a spell of reinforcement, then that *rest* does not lie in suspension of effort or withdrawal from it. Real rest lies in more work. Perhaps the occupation can be changed for the moment; some other kind of effort may be undertaken, if the mind shows signs of fatigue. But exertion must go on. The more you work the more grows your capacity.

Most of the strain that men experience while at work in life is really due to a wrong attitude to work. Desire is the first agent that gives a vitiating twist to the effort. One is constantly and fervently looking forward to the result to fulfil the impelling desire; this impatience and hunger for a particular result involves considerable psychological stress. Similarly the ego, the consciousness of oneself as the doer, as one who has to affirm himself constantly, gives a false perspective of things and one battles against the other egos for self-effectuation. And when the results are not in consonance with the expectations of the ego, there is strong adverse effect: disappointments and defeats play havoc wholly disproportionate to their real bearings. Or it may be some other unnatural factors like fear or anxiety in the mind overbear upon man; in all such cases there is an interference with the natural flow of effort and there is exhaustion. The one thing to do is to find out a way by which one can work in tune with the rhythm of Nature, free from every kind of psychological or vital load pressing all the time.

To rely upon something greater than one's own strength, on the Divine Force for instance, gives a security that takes away all anxiety and apprehension. To widen one's consciousness so as to identify oneself more and more with the universal Consciousness is another way. It is the universal force that does the work and you do not suffer any depletion. On the contrary the more one abandons oneself to its momentum the more exhilarated one feels. This is the secret to stay fresh in the midst of work.

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VEDANTA AND THE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT

SWAMI SWAHANANDA

[Swami Swahananda, an ex-Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*, is the Head of the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi. This article is an adoption from a lecture given by him at the New Delhi Ashrama, sometime back and brings forth the claim of Vedanta to be a sound basis for the development and sustenance of democracy.—*Ed.*]

INDIAN culture down the ages has been influenced so much by Vedantic ideas that it has become synonymous with Vedanta. Vedanta has some unique ideas. Democracy too, specially during the last two and a half centuries, has developed some peculiar ideas and approach to life. Democracy has two aspects, political and philosophical. Rousseau spoke about the General Will of the people. Thomas Paine spoke about the Rights of Man. Abraham Lincoln popularised the idea of the Government of the people, for the people and by the people. They all spoke the tongue of politics. Based on these ideas democracy developed its economic and political theories. Politically democracy gives to every person the right of being an equally important entity in the social context. Philosophically, it is more or less dependent, originally at least it was, on the religious thinking, on the spiritual nature of man.

Vedanta in all these aspects has got a definite message to give and we do feel that Vedanta can be the philosophical basis of political democracy. Here democratic idea is a creed, but the most important thing is to create a temper, a mental climate, a mood in the average man of society to react to a particular situation with an attitude. That is what democracy as a way of life does. It is not at all foreign to the nature of Indians. In the olden days, the Vedic Aryans were a community of elders having equal share in conducting the work of the society. Later there were the *sanghas* and the *sabhas*. The *Mahābhārata* as well as Panini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* bear witness to it. These have also been referred to by the Greek travellers in their travelogues. We read of them in the Buddhist literature too. The Lichhavis, in which tribe Lord Buddha was born, as also other tribes were small Republics.

Equality of man, in the sense of equality of voice of every man in society, in running the Government is possible only in very small communities, as in Swiss Cantons. Democracy has, therefore, in modern times taken a turn to a sort of representative democracy, a limited democracy. A vast body of people select a group of people in legislatures and, probably, also the top executives in some countries. Every man is equal, politically speaking, in giving his opinion. It is true that there is difference between man and man. The contribution of an ordinary individual eking out a precarious existence may not be the same as the contribution of a highly gifted individual — a scientist, a social engineer, a man having special skill, for instance. Still, before the eyes of democracy, every man is equal and has one vote. So a sort of equality is practised.

Now, this particular type of political system, if it is to succeed in practice, in any particular given context, the society must be permeated with a democratic spirit. Otherwise, the path for totalitarian or autocratic Governments will be paved, as we have seen in various countries. So, unless the majority of the people are imbued with this particular idea, particular view of life, it is not possible for democracy to thrive in its real sense. To cultivate this temper is the duty of the thinkers of society and the propagators of ideals.

We find in most of the developing countries the hunger for the good things of life so great and the fall from the ideal so steep, that it has led to the formation of some type

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of totalitarian Governments. In India alone, among the newly freed countries, democracy is still struggling. It is necessary that we strengthen this spirit, because the alternative in modern context is totalitarianism; and totalitarianism believes, as one great thinker said, in the atomisation of man. What totalitarianism wants is the total control by the state of all the affairs of individuals, even his thinking. Free thinking and expression are obstructions in its path. Hence they insist on the atomisation of man.

Sorokin, the great sociologist, in 'The Reconstruction of Humanity' makes a very significant remark that the modern scientific and technological development in Europe and America, has ushered in the big corporations. Huge societies or corporations or business houses control the life of millions of their employees and their dependents. These big corporations, he says, are the harbingers of totalitarian Government. Now his argument is that if there are big corporations, then, the smaller ones gradually get merged in them. Thereby you get better efficiency no doubt, and for the sake of better efficiency, you go on merging the small units in the bigger units. As a result a time may come when 10 or 15 corporations may control the economy of the entire country. Now, if there is a conflict of interests between these groups, there is civil war. Or these big corporations also will be compelled to merge themselves or be fully controlled by a totalitarian form of Government. So Sorokin says, it is very peculiar that America, the most advanced democratic country of the world, is at the same time, fostering the forces which will ultimately nullify its idea of democracy. Any way, all thinkers agree that the assurance of continuance of democracy is in the temper of the people. If the vast majority of people are temperamentally democratic in their outlook and behaviour, democracy cannot be wiped out.

Political democracy is guided by people because everybody has got a vote. Government is a summation of individuals. When the majority of people want a particular type of Government, they can have it. So it is necessary, and it is accepted in democratic thinking, that a good amount of discussion should be there. Democracy has been defined by some thinkers as Government by discussion. People start with initial doubts, they discuss the problems and come to a conclusion. So this openness of the mind is a characteristic of democracy.

Now, this type of mental climate, attitude or approach towards problems is more or less normal in Indian thinking. But it can be fostered more and more by popularising the Vedantic teachings. For on five or six counts Vedanta is definitely superior to any of the political theories in its capacity to impart this democratic spirit: of sharing, of discussion, of free thinking, of taking into consideration the view of the other man. India has been guided by this idea, throughout its history. India gave great freedom in thinking, though not so much of freedom in doing. As Swami Vivekananda says: India did not give freedom to society. As a result, Indian society did not develop much and could not have a variety of experiments in the social context. But it gave freedom to thought. As a result India excelled in wonderful efflorescences of thought-patterns evolved here. India gave freedom of discussion and that is why, to our astonishment we could see atheists preaching their philosophy right at the gates of temples. This shows how much freedom was allowed to thought, though there was no freedom for anybody to choose any way of life. There society came in and it controlled the pattern of life; it laid down the social habits and customs and manners and all had to conform to it. But in their thinking, they could have any type of thought they liked and they had perfect freedom to preach that idea as well. This freedom of discussion and patience to hear the other man's points of view is a pre-requisite for all democratic development. The Indian thinkers never stifled independent thinking. Whenever a Vedantic teacher tried to expound his theory he began by quoting the views of other people and then tried to answer the objections and establish his own view. There was always an attitude of readiness to understand the other man's viewpoint and an attempt to accommodate his views as far as possible. That is why

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the Vedantic theory, as developed by Acharya Śankara, could draw upon some of the concepts of Sāṅkhya, Yoga and other philosophies.

Liberalism and evolution of synthesis was the effect of Vedanta. If Vedanta tried to harmonize the different religions, it was because of its Indian temper. Many people find it difficult to define Hinduism; it is a conglomeration of faiths like Vaishnavism, Śaivism, Shāktism, and the like which were really speaking, different religions in the same manner as Islam and Christianity are different. But they were all harmonized because of the synthesizing power of Vedanta, a power which came from its democratic spirit of recognizing the truth, no matter where it lay.

Vedanta said that the Ultimate Reality, in the final analysis, is formless, but then, by some mysterious means It can take any form It likes because It is all-powerful. So It can take the form of Shiva, of Krishna, of Devi, in short whatever form a devotee wants to see. So there should be no question of quarrels among the votaries of the different religions. The particular form you are worshipping is the same as the other form being worshipped by the other man and both are the same Ultimate Principle, 'the chosen deity'. Every one can have his own 'Iṣṭa', but at the same time, each should know that all the different Iṣṭas are really the manifestations of the one God who can be either formless or with form. With that one theory, Vedanta harmonized the different religions and changed them into different sects within Hinduism. The same principle could apply to the other religions also.

Vedantic ideas were gradually being absorbed by the other religions. The evidence is seen in the coming up of the Sufis, an Islamic sect. It absorbed so much of Vedantic idea of oneness of beings that it was becoming one with Hinduism in its fundamental aspects. That is why in the Indian context you do not find any struggle in the mind of a Hindu to go to a Muslim fakir, if he is a realized soul, or a Muslim does not find it uncomfortable to go to a Hindu saint for inspiration. Akbar's Dīn-Ilāhi was a sort of piecing together the best things in different religions and an attempt to create a new religion. In later days, the Brahmos and others also tried to find out the best things from different religions and produce a new synthesis, free from all defects. But a vital religion cannot be created in this way. It requires a saint of enormous magnitude and great realizations to create it. Vedanta worked out a synthesis by a better method than the eclectics. It pointed out that all the accepted Iṣṭas are really reducible to the One. And it gave Hinduism the sense to recognize the truth in an opponent's views and its capacity to harmonize various views.

It will be a matter of not a little astonishment if it is said that this same idea of toleration was at the root of the much decried system of 'Varnas', which in later days came to be called as the caste system. It is this principle of harmonization that played not a small part in developing it. It might seem strange; all the same, it is true. For look into the history of mankind, the moral standard of early days of man's life was such that when a particular City State conquered another, though equally cultured and having equally sensible type of religion, customs, manners etc., still after the conquest, all the male folk of the vanquished City State were either butchered or made slaves. Such was the moral standard then in Greece. We need not apply our moral standard of the 20th century to the people of bygone days, almost 3,000 years ago. The same thing was practised even later in other parts of the world, where the original tribes were practically exterminated. As against this, look at the great humaneness of the Aryans. They came here, probably, from outside India and conquered its original inhabitants. Yet they did not exterminate the conquered people, did not even make them their slaves, but gave them only an inferior position and at the same time accepted them in their society.

Even in the twentieth century, if a country conquers another naturally the conquering people will consider themselves superior and the conquered not worth any respect. This is the norm even now. If, therefore, thousands of years ago the Aryans treated the conquered race better, does it not speak for

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the nobility of the Aryans ? Then originated the concept of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Śudras — different groups doing different functions of the society. All of them are equally important. It is not that the Śudras really issued from the legs of the Creator, as conceived in the image of the Virāt Puruṣa. The statement was just symbolic. Without legs man cannot move. So the Virāt Puruṣa, the Indian society, could not function without legs, without the people who would be producing wealth. Therefore they should be given a recognition : that was the concept. I would repeat, the stress, at that time, was on the positive aspect of the concept, on recognition.

The inferior position was rationalized by the conquered people's lack of power or initiative or incentive but that did not prevent their absorption in the larger body politic. This absorption was effected by a theory called re-interpretation. They said : You need not be completely absorbed in our society beyond recognition. Form a society of your own and take part in the bigger society. Retain your manners, customs, deities, food and everything else. At the same time, find out finer and higher meanings for them. If it is your habit to worship a tree, do it by all means. If it is your habit to worship the stone, do it by all means. But just think that you are worshipping not the tree nor the stone but the God who is behind the tree, the God behind the stone : i.e. re-interpret your object of worship.

In this way gradually the Aryanisation took place, giving a higher and higher interpretation to ordinary things of worship, ordinary manners and customs.

In this way also, gradually, higher and higher standards of morals were brought into the society and the absorption took place. That was the origin of caste : separate groups of people retaining all their characteristics and yet remaining part and parcel of a single society.

In a way it looks peculiar, but will not if I give an analogy. In India we have people speaking, say, 13 or 14 major languages. Everybody is allowed to have his own. Still we form a body, the greater Indian society. We do not find any disharmony in that, no peculiarity in that. Similarly, in those days, these Aryans said to the others : Have your own manners and customs, your own food habits, own deities, own method of worship, but still you are part and parcel of our society. If today, the existence of linguistic groups as part of a bigger society is possible, the caste groups of the ancient days need not possibly be denounced, more so because the standards of the castes in the lower positions were being raised and they were being increasingly absorbed in the larger body-politic.

Vedanta played a very important part in this absorption of people of different groups. It declares, that there is the One Spirit in everybody ; that there is God in every human being, God whose manifestations can be various. There can be various forms and names. That is why creation means varieties of names and forms, although intrinsically there is oneness. In all these thousands of varieties you find out a common point also. This is the unity of existence, which means, everybody is basically divine.

The Vedantic idea of tolerance was extended to all tastes and expressions of dress, of food and the like. Variety is the spice of life. Even now, in our own being we have got this temperament of consideration for the other man's view. For Vedanta has prepared our mind for it. You can move in any dress you like in the Indian streets. But, even a few years ago, you could not move in many foreign countries without being jeered at, if you went in a dress unfamiliar to them. Even now, that is by and large the case. That means they lack the catholicity in regard to other people's tastes. That means they are not able to put into practice the spirit of freedom that democracy assures to every man even when this freedom does not disturb the general social order.

Variety is necessary in life. Unless there is variation in temperature there will be no storms, no rains, no grains, and therefore no life. So there must be variety ; it is, in fact, in nature itself. But does that mean that there will be complete dissociation between one variety and another ? No. Then also, there will be complete chaos. So, search for unity is also necessary.

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As we allow for varieties, we must try to find out unity also. And this unity was provided for by Vedanta through its theory of unity of consciousness, of the One Spirit indwelling in all. With this idea, Vedanta fostered the basis for this great ideal of unity in variety. In democracy you require this ideal. Unity must be there, so that all the people of the different groups, in a country, can feel some common bonds. Somewhere one must feel a common aspiration, common ideals and the like. But at the same time a variety in culture, in expression, in food, habits and clothes etc. has to be allowed.

In the political context also varieties of manners and customs and varieties of group loyalties can be allowed provided there is the national consciousness. But if you allow only variety without unity, without cohesion at the social, temperamental and ethical, levels, there will be fragmentation of society and total atomisation of man : Every man will be directly related to the State and unity will be sought only at the political level, which is the goal of some of the politicians.

In the Indian society people are accused of being too much attached to the families. They are not easily transferable from one place to another. This is not good from the point of view of economic development. But there is another side to it. It shows cohesion within the family, unity within the environment. In some countries, thousands of people have been overnight sent to outlying areas, completely cut off from their families. There the politicians have in a sense brought about absolute mobility : they can take one group of people at a moment's notice to another part of the country for quick economic development and quick material achievement. It is quite good so far as economic efficiency is concerned. But the goal of a Government is not merely economic efficiency, and turning people into automatons but also finding out ways of development of the heart. People shorn off of all sentiments and emotional bonds will be turned into automatons, or demons or reduced to atoms in the process of atomisation. A thinker has nicely put it as the 'insectification of man'. Like insects men are conducted to whatever part of the world without consideration to any of their human sentiments.

It was against this insectification that Vedanta fostered liberalism in the Indian thinking itself. And this liberalism is the basis of all democratic concepts. What was the important idea which Vedanta or spiritual conception of the universe gave? Vedanta said that there is a moral order of the universe, that the entire universe is guided by a divine scheme, which is called '*Rita*', 'satya' or *dharma*. Its liberalism consisted in its recognition of different values of life. So in Hinduism we have a four-fold ideal of life, four legitimate goals of man: Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha. It is said that search for the pleasures of life — pleasures physical, aesthetic, artistic and intellectual — is a legitimate goal. Now to enjoy these pleasures, we require wealth. So search for wealth is also a legitimate goal. But both must be controlled by the conception of *dharma*, by a moral law so that in trying to acquire money for the sake of pleasures we do not flout the rights of other individuals. Man must, whenever he tries to get these pleasures and wealth, give an equal consideration to the other man. He must not adopt immoral means. An individual should not behave in a way that disturbs the social fabric. If the social fabric is disturbed he himself, as a part of the society, will be disturbed today or tomorrow. When the vast majority of people in a society does not observe moral laws, that society collapses.

The question is asked : Is religion necessary ? The necessity of religion can be explained from various standpoints, one of them is its social necessity, which hardly anybody can doubt, because religions, down the ages, have fostered the development of higher virtues. Speaking truth is one such virtue. It is very difficult to speak truth nowadays, they say, and that we cannot manage without telling lies. They may or may not be true in the context of a particular situation, but it cannot be a social ideal. If all the members in a particular society subsist on lies, then that society cannot go on for long. As they say, even dacoits have a norm : they have got a standard of mutual regard. People say, truth

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is not possible in business. But even then there is a standard of truth. Otherwise things cannot go on. So also with other higher virtues. In a family if every one is selfish, and each pulls in his or her own way, how long will that family keep together? Similar is the case with society. Of course, the impact is not felt immediately as in a family. If the vast majority of people in a society became selfish a limit will be reached, which, if crossed, will bring about a total collapse of that society, as it happened in the case of the Roman Empire.

It was a complete collapse of the character of the Roman people that was the cause of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, though it had the vigour to rule for a thousand years. So it is necessary that some values are recognised and constantly kept up before our eyes. And these are generally provided by religion.

The Vedic thinkers believed that there is a spiritual scheme of the universe and most of us also normally, if not definitely, believe that there must be some purpose. There are two major theories in the field. In the materialistic theory, there is no purpose in life: you are only a link in the larger chain and your function is to pass on the racial characteristics to later generations. Your duty is finished there and if you want to live at all, live in your progeny. That is the materialistic conception. The idealist conception throughout the world — and this is stressed in the Vedanta — is that there is a divine spiritual scheme of the universe, and a spiritual purpose in life. It is not meaningless, not 'a way to an abyss'. Whatever may be our approach, this idea gives us much consolation, great strength and energy to fight the battle of life. Life is not all smoothness. So if you come to know that there is a goal, a purpose in life, you will hesitate to resort to questionable means to acquire the things of the world and thereby disturb the whole social fabric. If I know my whole life is finished within 25 years, naturally I would be anxious to get all I can in a short time and I would not discriminate between the means. The result would be disastrous for the society.

When Aristotle was asked this question: What is the use of philosophy — philosophy in the sense of thinking? Aristotle said: It enables you to do things, without being commanded, what other people do by being commanded. Some people think of doing things without being commanded because they are convinced that it is intrinsically good to do good; naturally these people become good. Other people become good by the fear of the law. Now, society gives some latitude; it allows you to tell some lies. But if this latitude is turned into licence and if thieves become numerous, the police force will have to be made larger; if law-breakers are more, the military, will have to be increased. Society directs through law and enforces its authority in a particular way, and the individuals follow this norm willingly or unwillingly. But unwilling action is no ethical action. When you are goaded and compelled by a situation to follow a particular path, there is no morality involved in it, although you may do it out of fear. So it is said in ethics that if you conscientiously think of the pros and cons, you have got a free will to do either a right or a wrong thing and if you do the right thing, then you are a good man. When, however, compelled by the situation, you do a good thing, you are neither good nor bad. So, willingly we should follow the higher ideal.

As already said, Vedanta provides us with a philosophy of life and a scheme of the universe. If you believe in this you naturally try to behave in such a way that in your progress in life, in getting good things of life, you do not become a source of tyranny. Of course, Vedanta does not say that all people can be simultaneously and equally happy in material possessions. It is an impossibility. An affluence somewhere means poverty and penury somewhere else. Swami Vivekananda was once asked: Is it possible to do good to the world? Swamiji said: 'In an absolute sense, no; in a relative sense, yes.' To explain this he told a story:

> There was a poor man who wanted some money, and, somehow, he had heard that if he could get hold of a ghost, he might command him to bring money or anything else he liked; so he was very anxious to get hold of a ghost.

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He went about searching for a man who would give him a ghost, and at last he found a sage, with great powers, and besought his help.

The sage said, 'Don't disturb yourself, go home.' The next day the man went again to the sage and began to weep and pray. At last the sage was disgusted, and said: 'Take this charm, repeat this magic word, and a ghost will come, and whatever you say to him he will do. But beware; they are terrible beings, and must be kept continually busy. If you fail to give him work he will take your life.' The man replied, 'That is easy; I can give him work for all his life.'

Then he went to a forest, and after long repetition of the magic word, a huge ghost appeared before him, and said, 'I am a ghost. I have been conquered by your magic; but you must keep me constantly employed. The moment you fail to give me work, I will kill you.' The man said, 'Build me a palace,' and the ghost said, 'It is done; the palace is built.' 'Bring me money,' said the man. 'Here is your money,' said the ghost. 'Cut this forest down, and build a city in its place.' 'That is done,' said the ghost. 'Anything more?' Now the man began to be frightened and thought he could give him nothing more to do; he did everything in a trice. The ghost said, 'Give me something to do or I will eat you up'. The poor man could find no further occupation for him, and was frightened. So he ran and ran and at last reached the sage and said, 'Oh, sir, protect my life!" The sage asked him what the matter was, and the man replied: 'I have nothing to give the ghost to do. Everything I tell him, he does in a moment, and he threatens to eat me up if I do not give him work.' Just then the ghost arrived, saying, 'I will eat you up,' and he would have swallowed the man. The man began to shake, and begged the sage to save his life. The sage said: 'I will find you a way out. Look at that dog with a curly tail. Draw your sword quickly and cut the tail off and give it to the ghost to straighten out.' The man cut off the dog's tail and gave it to the ghost, saying: 'Straighten that out for me.' The ghost took it and slowly and carefully straightened it out, but as soon as he let it go, it instantly curled up again. Once more he laboriously straightened it out, only to find it again curled up as soon as he attempted to let go of it. So he went on for days and days, until he was exhausted and said: 'I was never in such trouble before in my life. I am an old veteran ghost, but never before was I in such trouble. I will make a compromise with you,' he said to the man, 'you let me off and I will let you keep all I have given you and will promise not to harm you'. The man was muc pleased, and accepted the offer gladly.*

Swamiji said, 'This world is like a dog curly tail, and people have been striving to straighten it out, for hundreds of years but when they let it go, it has curled up again.' As long as you hold it, it is kept straightened. Much improvement is there social and other progress and much happiness too. As soon as you leave it, it goes down. Thus a particular part of the world will be prosperous, but another part will be less prosperous. But then much of this inequality can be removed by proper distribution. Vedanta can foster a mood for distribution of wealth. A favourable climate of opinion, a mental disposition to share wealth with others is a necessary condition for that. In Vedantic thinking, the idea of sharing is predominant. Vedanta did not believe in any privilege. Swami Vivekananda speaking about 'Vedanta and Privilege' says 'Vedanta does not believe in any privilege — whether it is privilege of birth, or wealth or any other'. Complete equality is the ideal, but variety is allowed because it is in the nature of things. The ideal is to strive for equality in the full knowledge that disparity is in the very nature of things — a knowledge which must not, however, deter efforts to mitigate as far as possible the sufferings of people. Vedanta tried to foster this idea in the people by the idea of '*dāna*'. If you read the *Gītā* which is an important Vedantic classic, you find three important ideas — *yajñā, dāna* and *tapas*. Every now and then Sri Krishna speaks about these. Acharya Śankara defines *dāna* as 'sharing'. We are already convinced that there must be fair distribution of the good things of life. that we must have a socialistic type of society. At least, the means of production must be socialised so that the equal distribution also can be more efficiently organized.

An example of how the idea of sharing had taken hold of Indian people may be cited here. When the Zamindari Abolition Act was being passed in the State of West

* *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, p. 77.

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Bengal, a great foreign dignitary who was in Calcutta was astonished that there was no rioting, no bloodshed. Land reforms meant hundreds of people were being deprived of privileges which they were enjoying for a long time. Their main means of life were being taken away by legislative acts. Yet there was no bloodshed. He asked the then Chief Minister of West Bengal about it. The reply was that it was the idea of the Indians to consider accumulation of wealth as a kind of cheating. If you procure too much wealth, it is as if you have deprived the other man. That idea is so much in the Indian consciousness that even the rich feel their wealth is not legitimately theirs.

There is a verse in the *Bhāgavata* which says you should have just enough property to maintain yourself. If you have more than that, it is equivalent to stealing others property. As a result of constant repetition, this idea is deeply imprinted in the minds of the Indian people. And that is why, as Tagore said, Indian philosophy taught the kings of India to relinquish their kingdoms at the approach of old age.

Swamiji says, the Europeans take pride in feeling that they are the descendants of the robber barons, whereas Indians try to trace their ancestry to the Rishis. That shows the temper of our people. Wherever there was sacrifice, we have given respect. An Indian does not spurn enjoyment; so he requires wealth. But at the same time he knows a man who renounces his wealth is a greater man than himself. That is why in Indian thinking, the Brahmin was given the highest prestige. He did not have enough to eat; his was a life of sacrifice for the benefit of the society; at the same time he was the brain of the society. He gave the laws. If he had wealth, a vested interest would have been created in him, as a result he would have tried to frame laws in a way that safeguarded his interests. It would then have been no good law. So the first condition for earning the right to be the law-giver was that you did not have any property. You renounced all your rights and courted poverty. If you opted for poverty, it is true that you would not get the good things of life like other men, but the society said: 'We would give you the compensation.' This compensation was in the form of prestige, honour.

Honour is a great incentive to work. Why should men work if there is no personal property, it is often asked. That is the argument given against the communist principle. But then, prestige is an equally potent force. Up to a certain extent, you want property, security, wealth, but a state comes when wealth does not satisfy. Then man begins to give away wealth, because he wants honour. Otherwise, how can you account for the benevolence of some of the capitalists? Their whole life is spent in amassing wealth. All the joys of life they have practically denied themselves only to acquire money. Yet, at the fag end of their life, or at the height of their money-power, they give in charity, found schools or colleges. Why? For name and fame. Name is a great motive force in guiding man.

Vedanta created consciousness that there is a higher goal and that a stage must come in everybody's life when he must transcend the hungers for these pleasures, and be dedicated to higher and higher causes. This mood has been created by constant preaching, over thousands of years. Man knows by instinct that it is good to be of a sacrificing type, but it is also necessary that he must be able to feed himself first. I am sure, no type of totalitarian society that stresses material prosperity to the exclusion of human values can gain ground in India if only the basic needs of man are provided.

Vedanta has thus created in us what can be rightly termed a democratic temperament, of sharing, of discussion, of seeing the other man's viewpoint, of finding a unity in all these varieties of manifestations. And all this is important to make a political experiment with democracy a success. So, if we clearly know the demands democracy makes on the society for its success, and how Vedanta has been of service in creating that particular mood, we will find that Vedanta has already done a great service. It can do still better service if we popularise these ideas, preach them to the masses of India, and let the masses know these basic ideas of Indian philosophy, religion and life.

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KURESA AZHWAR

(Continued from May, 1964 issue)

SWAMI PARAMATMANANDA

[Swami Paramatmananda is Editor, *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam*, a Tamil monthly of the Ramakrishna Order. This article is a continuation of the life of Kureśa, a great saint of Viśiṣṭādvaita persuasion, that appeared in our May 1964 issue.—*Ed.*]

KUREŚA'S SELF-PITY

ONCE Kureśa happened by chance to behold Sri Ramanuja leading a poor dumb man into the inner chamber of his monastery after shutting up the outer door. This strange action naturally excited the curiosity of Kureśa, who was thereby tempted to watch, what was going to take place, through a chink in the door. Sri Ramanuja showed his holy feet to the dumb man and by means of gestures made him understand that they would be the sole refuge for his salvation; and presumably by virtue of his singular good fortune he cognized the true significance of the teaching imparted to him. Immediately he fell down at his master's hallowed feet, hugged the precious treasure to his breast and with due deference placed them on the pedestal of his own head. This act of unsolicited grace on the part of the master pierced Kureśa's heart and made him exclaim with unwonted pathos, 'Fie upon my learning that stood as an impediment to the spontaneous flow of Divine grace! Fain would I have been born as an illiterate dumb man, and been the recipient of the World-Teacher's grace!' and fall into a deep swoon overwhelmed by the surging emotion.

HIS COMPASSION FOR LIVING CREATURES

As Kureśa was walking along a road at dusk one day, his attention was arrested by the piteous cry of a frog caught in the mouth of a poisonous snake, and he addressing the frog said, 'Alas for you! Who is there to listen to your distressing cry? Do you fondly imagine yourself to be on the shore of the Divine milk-ocean where the all-compassionate Lord Vishnu sleeps on His serpent couch apparently, but really rests in *samādhi* with His vision turned inwards, to listen to every wail of sorrow from any quarter in the created worlds?' and instantly fell down senseless on the floor.

On another occasion as he was entering his garden with some purpose, he observed that a servant had just the previous minute cut down a plantain leaf of a tree which was, as a consequence, profusely shedding its life juice at the stem, and unable to bear the sight he fainted on the spot.

One fine morning on the bank of the river Kaveri, Kureśa saw a young girl standing by the side of a big pitcher filled with water and casting her wistful glance on the passers-by, eloquent in the expression of the urgent need to lift the pitcher from the ground and place it on her hip. Realizing her plight, he fulfilled her voiceless request with feelings of joy and gratitude.

Another day as Kureśa was combing his hair, he chanced to observe some lice clinging to the hair on the comb, and with a heart stung with remorse for the injury he had unwillingly caused to creatures living on his head, forthwith vowed that he would never use a comb for the rest of his life, with the result that his hair became matted.

CHOLA'S PERSECUTIONS

As Sri Ramanuja was carrying on his spiritual ministry and propagating Sri Vaishnavism with the assistance of an array of distinguished disciples, the unprecedented success of his mission roused the jealousy and hatred of the then Chola king, who was a man of Śaivite persuasion and rank

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bigotry. His plan of campaign for undermining the rival faith of Vaishnavism was to destroy the temples of Vishnu which are the citadels of orthodoxy, and to convert people to Śaivism by resorting to force and persecution. He wished to compel Vaishnavites, all and sundry, to affix their signatures, as a mark of their consent, to the statement he had written on a sheet of paper — 'There is no Deity higher than Śiva.' (शिवात् परतरं नास्ति) While some yielded to the temptations of royal favours and rewards and some others complied with the king's wish out of fear of punishment, a few there were who fled away from the city to sequestered abodes in the remotest villages. It was at this juncture that Naluran, one of the king's ministers — though a disciple of Kureśa — prevailed upon the king to seek the easier method of getting the declaration about Śiva's supremacy ratified by the signatures of a few enlightened Vaishnavas like Sri Ramanuja and Kureśa, for he said, the common run of Vaishnavas would merely follow them. This was appreciated and approved by the king and so he quickly sent messengers to Srirangam to summon Sri Ramanuja to the king's court. When the messengers announced their errand to the door-keepers of Sri Ramanuja's monastery, they rushed inside and whispered the news to Kureśa, that the king's servants were waiting outside to take Sri Ramanuja to the palace. The shrewd Kureśa scenting mischief and disaster, without even informing his master about the step he intended to take, hastily donned the ochre robes of Sri Ramanuja, leaving behind his own white clothes, and with a triple staff of the Sannyasi in his hands, emerged from the monastery saying 'I am Ramanuja. Let us proceed'. Maha Purna, one of the preceptors of Ramanuja, apprehending sure danger to Kureśa, accompanied him. When the party reached the palace, the king summoned the two reputed Vaishnavites to his presence; and presenting before the monk the sheet of paper containing the declaration, asked the Sannyasin to express his assent to the doctrine thereon by signing it. When the monk read it he started discussion against it by quoting freely from the Vedas, Upaniṣads and other Śāstras. The king, fearing a defeat in the duel of words, insisted on his signing the declaration. There upon Kureśa wrote in protest the sentence '*Dhronam* (two measures) is higher than *Śiva* (one measure)' and signed below it. This play upon words incensed the king, who immediately ordered that the eyes of Kureśa should be pulled out as a punishment for his effrontery; but Kureśa exclaimed, 'You need not take that trouble, tyrant; I shall do it with my own hands since these eyes that have seen a ruler like you are not fit for seeing my Master'. A martyr to the cause of Vaishnavism Kureśa unfinchingly gouged out his eyes and threw them away to the horror of all present. Then the king turned to the venerable old Maha Purna and asked him to sign the statement. Purna too refused and the king commanded his ruffians to pluck out the eyes of Purna; and after the deed was perpetrated, the King drove the two brave souls out of the palace.

As the martyrs were returning from the palace the daughter of Maha Purna, who had followed them all the way without their knowledge, was shocked to see them return with blood streaming from the cavities of their eyes and drenching their bodies. She ran to them and led them by their hands to a lonely place, washed their eyes and bandaged them, and later lead them back to their homes at Srirangam. Kureśa with his utmost fortitude and unconquerable willpower defied the physical torment and consoled himself by the thought that he was blessed indeed to lose his Darśana (eye) for the sake of his Darśana (faith); but the old Purna, overwhelmed by the agony, breathed his last on the way, fixing his thoughts on his guru Yāmunacharya.

Kureśa's Trip to Tirumalirumcholai

No sooner had he reached Srirangam than he directed his steps towards the outer precincts of the temple, where standing in front of the temple and writhing in anguish he prayed: 'Canst Thou condescend to confer on me the favour of liberation from the shackles of the body as you did on Maha Purna?' Later as he moved forward longingly to enter into the temple, the guards at the entrance apprised him of the royal man-

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date that no follower of Ramanuja should have access to the sanctum sanctorum, and yet added that in consideration of his spiritual eminence, an exception could be made, provided he would disclaim his relationship with Ramanuja. Thereupon Kureśa closed his ears and exclaimed thus: 'Alas! that the possession of spiritual qualities which should lead to the establishment of one's relationship with the preceptor should make me sunder the sweet bond!' and then with sorrow and bitterness overflowing his heart, groped his way back with the words: 'Suffice it to say that I would rather forego my prostration before the Lord, than my relationship with the hallowed feet of my divine Preceptor, which is a sure passport to my salvation.' Soon he left Srirangam and undertook a pilgrimage to the holy abode of Tirumalirumcholai near Madurai. In the course of the journey, lest mundane miseries find an abode in his lacerated heart, he was spending his time in loving contemplation of the Lord in his transcendental and image-incarnation aspects, and in the spiritual enjoyment of His nature, form, qualities and manifestations. This found spontaneous expression in mellifluous hymns of praise (*stavas*) characterized by depth of insight and richness of content. After reaching his destination he feasted his imagination on the charming beauty of Sundara Paripurna, the Lord of the Hill and composed the poem '*Sundarabahustavam*', giving vent in one verse to his intense desire to live again at Srirangam in the holy company of Sri Ramanuja.

Kureśa and Ramanuja at Srirangam

At this time, to the great relief of Kureśa, intelligence reached his ears that the Chola king, a traitor to Sri Vaishnavism, died of a carbuncle, festered with worms, in his neck and so he returned to Srirangam. In the meanwhile, Sri Ramanuja who had been advised to leave for Mysore was carrying on his spiritual mission of soul-saving in those parts for nearly two decades. One day a disciple informed him of the tragic happenings at Srirangam, during his absence. He grieved over the demise of his guru Maha Purna; and then consoling himself with the thought that Divine mercy had at least spared the life of Āzhwar, returned to Srirangam. His first act after arrival was to pay a visit to Kureśa, who hearing of the approach of his Master lay prostrate at his feet. Sri Ramanuja, raising him up, embraced him. Being overpowered by mingled sentiments of joy and sorrow, Ramanuja remained speechless for a while and then in a tremulous voice exclaimed, 'That thou, precious as the eye of our ancient faith, shouldst lose the eye was because of my sin indeed,' and then leading him by the hand took him to his own monastery. Next day Ramanuja listened to the recital of the three *stavas* composed by Kureśa, and, delighted beyond measure, called him to his side and earnestly enjoined him to compose a hymn on Varadaraja praying for the restoration of his eyesight. Kureśa humbly submitted his unwillingness to ask for material vision, but Ramanuja exhorted him to yield to his desire. Kureśa joyously composed the hymn 'Varadaraja Stavam' and in the twenty-third stanza beseeched the Lord to grant him spiritual vision that he might be enabled to behold His soul-bewitching beauty. That night God Varadaraja appeared in his dream and deigned to grant his boon. Kureśa rose next morning with a joyous heart and finished his poem; and proceeding to the Math repeated the whole poem before his Master and informed him of the gift of spiritual vision vouchsafed to him by God. But Sri Ramanuja in a tone of disappointment spoke unto him, 'My darling, this does not satisfy me. Come, let us both go to Kanchi and pray to the Lord for the restoration of your physical eye sight', and forthwith departed to Kanchi with Kureśa.

Kureśa's Manifestation of His Divine Quality

When both reached the presence of the Lord of Kanchi, Kureśa in accordance with the behest of his Master went on reciting the hymn he had composed on Lord Varada, and Ramanuja was obliged to leave the place on some urgent business. The recitation being finished, Lord Varada expressed His intention of granting any boon he would desire; whereupon Kureśa without the least

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hesitation prayed thus : 'May it please Thee to save Naluran out of thy mercy as I would be saved.' It was Naluran, a disciple of Kureśa, who instigated the Chola king to send for Ramanuja and get his royal declaration of faith signed by him and thus sowed the seed for the subsequent series of catastrophes ; yet Kureśa without even a shred of animosity against him, sought his salvation as he was sure to undergo the worst hell fires as the result of his misdeed. In the meanwhile, Ramanuja returned to the temple, and learning of what had happened, mildly reprimanded Kureśa for acting independently against his Master's wish and imploringly said to the Lord, 'Thou hast not fulfilled my wish!' The Lord replied, 'Ramanuja, let Āzhwar see Me and you with his physical vision'. Mightily pleased, Ramanuja asked Āzhwar to see the Lord and himself with his physical eyes and describe what he saw — which he did accurately. Partially contented with this, Ramanuja returned to Srirangam with his disciple. Here too a group of Sri Vaishnavites one day met Kureśa and questioned him as to the propriety of his prayer for the salvation of one who proved a traitor to Maha Purna, his own guru and to the Srivaishnavite faith and thereby deserved only damnation. Kureśa replied, 'What need for prayer in the case of souls who by virtue of their spiritual merit qualify themselves for entry into the Eternal Abode ? Venal sinners like Naluran doomed to perdition, they alone are in dire need of compassion.'

The Passing Away of Kureśa

Kureśa, the ideal saint, disciple and martyr, was daily raining words of spiritual wisdom from the heights of his realization to those who approached him, and shining like a brilliant star in the firmament of Srivaishnavism. One day, in the presence of Ramanuja, Kureśa was listening to the exposition of the verse in the last decad of Thiruvoymozhi dealing with the ascent of Nammalwar to the empyrean of ineffable bliss, wherein it was said, 'The Celestials of the Supreme abode came out to welcome Nammalwar', and the Acharya observed : 'Those that have reached the Suprme Heaven early welcome those who go there later.' The instant Kureśa heard this, he thought within himself, 'If I reach the Abode of God later than Sri Ramanuja, my Master will have to welcome me — which is preposterous ; so if I be there at the time of his ascent, mine will be the privilege of offering him a hearty welcome'. Immediately he hurried to the presence of Lord Ranganatha who enquired of him what favour he needed ; and Kureśa in an appealing tone submitted, 'Deign to grant me this boon. Let me kick off this mortal coil and reach Thy transcendental Abode'. On hearing this the Lord felt the sorrow of separation from him at Srirangam, yet unwilling to refuse the favour declared, 'It will be our pleasure to confer the Immortal Abode not only on you but also on those that bear any sort of relationship with you'. Kureśa returned home with a heart full of gratitude. The glad tidings soon reached the ears of Sri Ramanuja, who in a mood of pleasant surprise stood up and flung his upper garment into the air as an expression of his immense delight and then explained his action to his disciples, in front, thus : 'Devotees, today my salvation is assured by the Lord inasmuch as I bear relationship to Kureśa ; and the fear of being condemned to hell — for my flagrant disobedience to my Guru, Ghoshti Purna, in not keeping the Divine Mantra a secret — has been banished for ever from my mind.' Thus was established the truth that relationship with a *satśiṣya* (a true disciple) is as potent a means of attaining salvation as relationship with a *satguru* (a true preceptor).

But Ramanuja's joy soon gave way to grief at the impending prospect of separation from his beloved disciple and so he with a number of devotees proceeded to the dwelling place of Kureśa and tenderly asked him, 'Why have you inflicted on me the pain of separation from you ? You could as well have taken me also with you'. When Kureśa humbly submitted the only consideration that weighed in his mind, Sri Ramanuja pointed out to him : 'Since all distinctions are wiped out in the Highest Heaven and all are perfect and equal, no *shastraic* rule binds the souls there, my

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darling. The sorrow of bereavement is for the Lord and me. You have forgotten the sacred hymn of Thondaradippodi Āzhwar that says, "Enjoyment other than the sight of Ranganatha in the shrine here — even the sight of the Supreme Being in His Immortal Abode — I want not". But of what avail is all this now? May you leave this world for the eternal Abode!'

Thus fortified by the gracious permission of Sri Ramanuja, Kureśa made up his mind to depart from the mundane world. He prostrated at the feet of his Master Sri Ramanuja, and partook of the holy water got by washing his feet. He gave wise counsel to Āndal, his consort, and his two sons, and after consoling those who gathered about him and taking leave of all, he breathed his last, contemplating on Nāthamuni, Yāmunācharya and Ramanuja, and his soul flew to the blissful Abode of God.

Kureśa's countless spiritual qualities, his hymns pregnant with profound thoughts, his illuminating commentary on Nammālwar's songs, his deep devotion to God and his Ācharya, and the absence of even a trace of egoism — all these constitute a rich spiritual legacy for all the succeeding generations of Sri-vaishnavites; and his Divine personality shines for ever as a beacon of celestial effulgence on the hill of spirituality. May He guide us all from error to Truth, from darkness to Light, and from death to Immortality!

(*Concluded*)

TIRUVENKADU AND PALLAVANESVARAM

R. NAGASWAMY

[Sri R. Nagaswamy, M.A., is Assistant to the Special Officer, Department of Archaeology, Madras State and has contributed to the *Vedanta Kesari* previously also.—*Ed.*]

TIRUVENKADU, about 9 miles from Sirkali is an important Śaivite centre. The temple dedicated to Śvetāranyeśvarar and the Goddess Brahmavidyambal has been in existence from ancient times and has the distinction of being referred to in their songs by Appar, Sambandar, Sundaramurti and Manikkavacakar. This temple is situated on the seashore and within three miles from Kaveripoompattinam, and has received great attention at the hands of the Chola emperors, who carried out renovations many a time and gifted lands and wealth for worship. The Chola inscriptions refer to this place as Tiruvenkadu of Nangoor in the sub-division of Nangoornadu. Appar who lived in the 7th century A.D. has sung the praises of the Lord:

"He, the Lord of Tiruvenkadu, has the white bull of majestic strides as His mount. Resplendant in His body, He has taken bath in the sacred water, and He carries the trident. He is adorned with a serpent. His earlocks are beautified with serpents. His golden matted hair hang behind. A silvery moon adorns His *jaṭa*. He, the Lord, coming on the high street, has captivated my heart." [1]

His younger contemporary Gnanasambandar gives a graphic account of the Lord of Tiruvenkadu:

"The One who bears an eye on His forehead, fire in His arm, a female on His body,

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[1] தூண்டு சுடர்மேனித் தூநீராடிச்
சூலம் கையேந்தியோர் சுழல்வாய் நாகம்
பூண்டு பொறிஅரவங்காதிற் பெய்து
பொற்சடைகளவைதாழப் புரிவெண் ணூலர்
நீண்டு கிடந்திலங்கு திங்கள் சூடி
நெடுந்தெருவே வந்தெனது நெஞ்சங் கொண்டார்
வேண்டு நடைநடைக்கும் வெள்ளேறேறி
வெண்காடு மேவிய விகிர்தனாரே.

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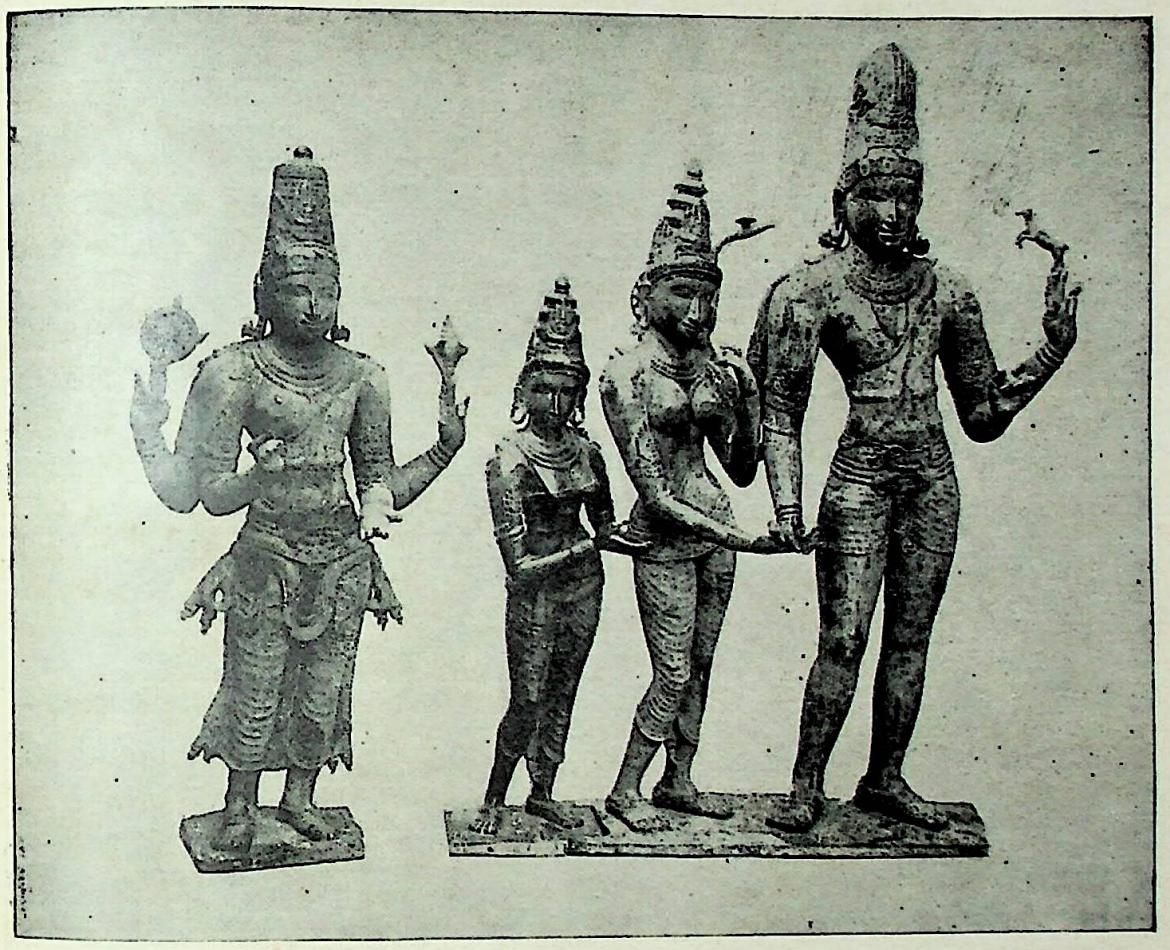

Kalyanasundara — Tiruvenkadu.

COURTESY : *Department of Archaeology, Madras State.*

(For details of description see article on "Tiruvenkadu and Pallavanesvaram" appearing on page 84.)

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Vṛshavahana — Tiruvenkadu.

Skanda — Pallavaneśvaram.

COURTESY : *Department of Archaeology, Madras State.*

(For details of description see article on "Tiruvenkadu and Pallavanesvaram" appearing on page 84.)

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a moon on His *jaṭa*, and music in the *Pan*, is the Lord of Venkadu." [2]

The temple proper is enclosed by a big *prākāra* extending from east to west for over 792 feet in length and from north to south for 300 feet in breadth. There are two entrances topped by moderate *gopuras*, the one on the east being the main entrance, while the other is on the west. Inside the outer *prākāra* are the three *tīrthas* (sacred tanks) called Agni Tīrtha, Surya Tīrtha and Chandra Tīrtha. A bath in all these *tīrthas* is believed to wash away the sins of the devotees and grant their desires. That these *tīrthas* have a historic past, is proved by *Silapadikāram*, where two of these tanks are mentioned viz. Somakundam and Surya-kundam. Gnanasambandar has referred to all the three tanks thus :

> "The sins, of those who bathe in the sacred waters of three tanks of Venkadu, will not afflict them." [3]

Many episodes of the devotees who took bath in these *tīrthas* are mentioned but the most notable one is that of Achutha Kalappalar. He was a Vellala of Pennagaram who was without any children. On the advice of his *guru* Sakalāgama Panditha Arul Nandi Sivacharya of Tiruthuraiyur, he went on a pilgrimage to Tiruvenkadu and took bath in the sacred tanks. He was bestowed with a son who was none other than the celebrated Meykandar, the author of Śaiva Siddhānta treatise, *Sivagñānabodham*. There are a number of sub-shrines in the outer *prākāra* of the temple besides the three *sthala-vṛkshas*, *vilva*, *vata* and *konrai*, as also a 100 pillared *mandapa*, a *utsava mandapa* and a *Unjal mandapa*. The shrine dedicated to Periadeviar or Brahmavidyambal is also situated on the north-western corner of this *prākāra*. The main entrance to the inner *prākāra* in the east, has been beautified with a newly constructed *Kalyana mandapa*. There is also an entrance on the western side. The main shrine of Śvetāranyeśvara or Tiruvenkadu Udaiyar is in the centre, facing east. On the outer walls of the shrine are noticed a number of inscriptions of the Chola and Pandya emperors. The sculpture of Lingapuranadevar at the back niche of the shrine is remarkable for its beauty. On the south wall is depicted a scene representing Airāvata, Indra's elephant, worshipping Siva. According to a legend, the sage Dūrvāsa presented a flower garland to Indra which the Airāvata took in its trunk and threw away. Dūrvāsa cursed it to be born as a wild elephant. Indra's Airāvata thus became a wild elephant and reaching *śvetavana* (Tiruvenkādu) attained *moksha* by worshipping the Lord. This episode is referred to in Thevaram hymns of Appar and Gnanasambandar.[4]

Besides the central deity, Somaskanda, Nataraja, Bhadrakali, and Aghoramurti are also housed in the sub-shrines of this *prākāra*. Somaskanda is a beautiful image, in all probability dedicated during the time of the Cholas. The *Adavallar* (*Sabhāpati*) is remarkable for His divine grace and receives the admiration of the devotees. The Aghoramurti is said to have quelled the pride of Maruttuvasura. The shrine of Bhadrakali is correspondingly on the other side of the shrine of Aghoramurti.

Indra, Agastya, Vyagrapada, Vedarasi, Svetaketu and other *paurānic* figures are said to have worshipped the Lord of Śvetāranya. Gnanasambandar is said to have been carried in Her arms by the Goddess Periya-

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[2] கண்காட்டு நுதலானுங் கனல் காட்டுங் கையானும்
பெண் காட்டும் உருவானும் பிறைகாட்டுஞ் சடையானும்
பண் காட்டும் இசையானும் பயிர்காட்டும் புயலானும்
வெண் காட்டில் உறைவானும் விடை காட்டுங் கொடியோனே.

[3] வெண்காட்டு முக்குளநீர் தோய்வினையார் அவர்தம்மைத் தோயாவாந் தீவினையே

[4] வெள்ளானை வேண்டும் வரங்கொடுப்பார் வெண்காடு மேவிய விகிர்தனாரே.
—அப்பர்

"The Lord of Venkadu bestows all the boons on the white elephant."
— APPAR

அயிராவதம் பணிய மிக்கதனக்கு அருள்சுரக்கும் வெண்காடு —சம்பந்தர்

"The Venkadu, which bestows kindness on Airavata."
— SAMBANDAR

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nayaki Herself and hence She came to be called *Pillai Idukki Amman.* The other historical figure associated with this sacred place is Tiruvenkadu Nangai, the wife of Siruttondar, who led the Pallava army of Narasimha Varman I to conquer Vatapi (642 A.D.). A flower garden in the temple is still called *Tiruvenkadu Nanga Tirunandavanam.*

Sembian Mahadevi, Koothan Virani, Vanavanmadevi, Villavanmadevi, and other queens of the Chola emperors have endowed, wealth, land and costly jewels to the deities. Among the Chola kings represented in inscriptions, Raja Raja I, Rajendra, Rajadhi Raja, Kulottunga and Vikrama Chola deserve special mention. Many chieftains have established *sandhi-worships* in the temple after their own names as Kulasekhara Tondaiman sandhi, Kaliyugaraman sandhi, Nagarasa sandhi etc. There were many mutts in the temple to feed the pilgrims and the Śiva-yogis who visited the temple. Besides, there was an *atulasalai* (hospital) to treat the sick, a college to teach students (*apurvins*), a *go-salai* to take care of the cows; other institutions also existed in the temple, during the Chola rule.

Tiruvenkadu has became famous the world over for its unique collection of metal images unearthed within the precincts of the temple. The images so far unearthed are Kalyanasundara, Vṛshavahana, Uma, Bhikshatanar, Bhairava, Ardhanari, Somaskanda, Natarāja with Śivakāmi, Pārvati and Caṇḍikeśvara of which the first five are in the Tanjore Art Gallery, the Ardhanari and Candikeśvara are in the Madras Museum and the rest are being worshipped in the temple. All these images are gracefully modelled and in the best Chola tradition and most of them are dated with the help of inscriptions in the temple.

An inscription in the temple records that during the 26th year of Rajakesari Rajaraja I, the great Chola monarch, a gift of money was made for arranging the offering and purchase of jewels to Vṛshavāhanadeva, set up in the temple by Kolakkavan. During the 27th year of the same king a copper image of Umaparameswari was set up in the temple by some persons. So it is certain that the images of Vṛshavāhana and Umaparamesvari were set up during the period of the great Chola king Rajaraja I, during whose period the great temple of Tanjore came into existence and a number of bronze images were gifted to the temple. During the 30th year of Rajakesari Rajadhirajadeva, Ambalan Seyyavayar set up the image of Piccha Devar (Bhikshāṭana), donated lands for arranging His worship, presented gold and silver ornaments and obtained lands for the temple from the king's father who was pleased to take *purvadesa*, Gangai and Kadaram. During the 27th year of the same king, a gift of gold and silver ornaments were made by the same person Ambalan Seyyavayar to Piccha-devar. Rajadhiraja I was the son of Rajendra Chola I and was appointed Yuvaraja very early in his reign and so the figure may be assigned to about 1045 A.D. Another inscription in the same temple records that during the 28th regnal year of Rajakesari Varman alias Rajaraja I, a gift of gold offerings was made to Adavallar (Sabhapati) by Kuttar-viraniyar, a queen of the king. The reference is to the Nataraja figure of the group. The Ardhanāriśvara figure, which is one of the most remarkable finds of recent times, is also mentioned in an inscription of the temple, which states that during the 29th year of Rajakesari Rajadhiraja I a gift of land was made by the king sitting on the flight of steps to the north of *gangaikonda cholan maligai,* inside the palace of Gangaikonda-cholapuram, for the service of Ardhanārīdeva in the temple of Tiruvenkadu Udaiyar. The figure of Ardhanārīśvara may also be placed before 1045 A.D. A study of all these bronze images will be amply rewarded by an appreciation of the art of South Indian metal casting during the rule of the Cholas.

The place of Kaveripoompattinam in the history of the Tamil country is well-known. In the post-Sangam classics, reference is made to Buddha viharas, Jain pallis and Hindu temples existing in this port-city of the Cholas. Archaeologists are busy in unearthing the past glory of the city.

A small but impressive temple in the village called Pallavaneswaram is another important Śaivite temple on the sea-shore, where the river Cauveri joins the sea. That this temple was an important Śiva shrine is attested by Gnanasambandar's Thevaram. It is interest-

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ing to note that Sambandar's description of Puhar with full of *Punnai* groves can be witnessed even to this day. The Deity at this temple has been in perpetual worship and many renovations have been carried out to this temple so far. No ancient inscriptions are noticed in the present structure. The calm and serene atmosphere of the temple infuses in one's mind what may be called the divine ecstasy.

A group of ancient metal images of remarkable beauty will draw the admiration of the visitor.

Vṛshabantika : The most beautiful metal image in this temple is that of Śiva as Vṛshabantika. The Lord is standing on a lotus pedestal in *aliḍha* pose with four arms. The upper arms hold *paraśu* and *mṛga*. The lower left arm is rested on a Vṛshabha and the right is extended and is held in *ahuya-varada* pose. The whole figure is slightly elongated. The head bears a beautiful *jaṭamukuṭa*. The face has a captivating charm and beauty. The cosmic contemplation and divine charm of this face makes it one of the best creations of the Tamil country. The accompanying figure of Umaparamesvari, standing upto the chest of the Master is a fitting comparison to the Vṛshabhantika. She is two-armed with the left in *lola* pose and the right in *kataka* holding a flower. The head dress of the image resembles that of the Vṛshabhantika though in later sculptures one meets with *karanda mukuta*. The image of the Devi is an elegant creation. The bull which should have accompanied the figure is missing.

Umāskanda : Another masterpiece of metal sculpture is the Umaskanda image also in the same place. It should have formed part of a Somaskanda group. Unfortunately the Śiva is missing. Uma is shown seated on a square pedestal in a delightful pose with her right leg on the pedestal and the left resting down. She is also two-armed holding a lily in her right. The left arm is rested on the lap. Her ears are adorned with beautiful *patrakundalas*. The head-dress is very pleasing, a flower adorns the top of the *mukuta*. The treatment of the head-dress at the back is most charming and unique.

Skanda as a little boy is seated on the pedestal to the right of his mother. He is also two-armed holding a flower with his right arm. He wears a *channavira* and the head slightly posed back, suggests majesty. It is quite unfortunate that the Śiva of this group is missing. Undoubtedly it should have been one of the finest images of Śiva. These may be ascribed to the period of Chola King, Aditya I (871-907 A.D).

Pallavaneśvaram and Tiruvenkadu are intimately connected with the life of Pattinattar, the mystic and saint. His parents Sivanesar and Jnanakalambal, who were residing at Kaveripattinam gave him the name of Tiruvenkadar, as a child. Tiruvenkadar lost his father at the age of five and at the instance of his mother, he mastered various branches of knowledge. He was given Śivadīksha at Tiruvenkādu by a Śivayogi, by presenting a Linga in a container. Tradition has it that this Yogi is none other than Lord Śiva himself. Ever since he became one of the greatest devotees of the Lord. Since he was born at Kaveripattinam he came to be called Pattinattar. It may thus be noticed that both Tiruvenkadu and Pallavanesvaram have religious, historic and artistic importance.

Those of you who can afford it will do better to have a room for this practise alone. Do not sleep in that room, it must be kept holy. You must not enter the room until you have bathed, and are perfectly clean in body and mind. Place flowers in that room always; they are the best surroundings for a Yogi; also pictures that are pleasing. Burn incense morning and evening. Have no quarrelling, nor anger, nor unholy thought in that room. Only allow those persons to enter it who are of the same thought as you. Then gradually there will be an atmosphere of holiness in the room, so that when you are miserable, sorrowful, doubtful, or your mind is disturbed, the very fact of entering that room will make you calm. This was the idea of the temple and the church, and in some temples and churches you will find it even now.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

THE same year Lātu Maharaj once came to see Rākhāl Maharaj at Alambazar Math. Rākhāl Maharaj, however, was not there then. We have heard it from Śaśi Maharaj that he requested him to stay at the Math. Śaśi Maharaj said, 'Why, brother, are you going about here and there? Why not stay here with us?' Śaśi Maharaj had said this when he saw Lātu Maharaj going away immediately he heard that Rākhāl Maharaj was not there. 'In answer to my request,' said Śaśi Maharaj, 'he laughed and said, "Not today, I will come some other day," and departed. When I said in a loud voice, "Please try to attend Master's birthday celebrations at Dakshineswar," he simply nodded and vanished.'

Lātu Maharaj did join the celebration that year and sang *kirtan* and danced along with Sri Vijay Krishna Goswami. Ramababu also attended it — so we have heard from Ramababu.

On September 5, 1894 the public of Calcutta held a mammoth meeting in the town hall to express their gratitude to Swami Vivekananda on his wonderful success in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. It was presided over by Raja Piyari Mohan Mukhopadhyaya; Narendranath Sen, Editor, the *Indian Mirror* and N. N. Ghosh, Editor, the *Indian Nation* spoke on the occasion. Lātu Maharaj attended the meeting along with Upen Babu.

Swami Bodhananda (Haripada Maharaj) said, 'During this time Lātu Maharaj used to come very often to Khagendranath Chatterji's house. There "Suddenly appearing" Gopal (Gopal Chandra Ghosh) of Gadpara would also come, and there used to be lively exchanges of banters between the two.'

Sometime in 1895-96 Lātu Maharaj went to Puri by boat. Balarambabu's nephew, Nitai Charan Bose is on record to have said: 'I was then ten or eleven, and was a sch student. One day I saw a Sannyasin a another gentleman come in a carriage a get down at our house, Śaśi Niketan at Pu The elder brother of my father was then Puri, he was very glad to have Lātu Mah raj in our midst. Then and there he call our head clerk and asked him to ma arrangements for his stay, food, and showi him round all the holy places of the tow I remember, he (Lātu Maharaj) went Bhuvaneswar and returning from there started for Cuttack, where he stayed for long time. From Cuttack he returned Calcutta by boat again.' Upenbabu too t us that Lātu Maharaj went to Puri by bo and that he bore the expenses.

Once again he had been to Puri. This w in 1903. This was on the occasion of t Swing Festival and it was Nanibabu, nephe of Dr Śaśi, who took him there. This tim he went by train.

There are two incidents, narrated by Lā Maharaj himself in connection with his fir visit to Puri. They were narrated later Balarambabu's house. 'Would you believe at Puri the Deity Jagannath is a living pr sence in the form of a wooden Image. H reveals Himself to man according to his ind vidual spiritual mood and attainments. prayed to Him to kindly reveal to me th beauty of His which made Sri Chaitany shed profuse tears day-in and day-out fo many, many years. I said, "What does th fool know of You. Kindly be gracious t me and reveal Yourself in the way whic spread a charm on the Great Lord, S Chaitanya". And He answered my praye for a day.

'When taking leave of Him, I asked tw boons of Him: "See that (1) I may n have to wander far and wide (i.e. settle m at one place so that I may plunge mys there in meditation on the Lord); (2) what

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ever I would eat would be digested (i.e. I may not suffer from stomach trouble, which is a great hindrance to spiritual practices)." ' A devotee asked the reason for the strange second boon and got the answer : 'Don't you understand this ? A sādhu would get by alms all kinds of things and at odd hours. By that he is to maintain his body. If his digestive organ is not all right his health will break down and his spiritual practices will suffer a setback. To prevent this I asked for the boon which appeared to you so queer.'

Much later he said to us of Sri Sri Jagannatha Deva : 'Where will you get such a place of pilgrimage as that ? All are equal there — there are no distinctions of class, caste or sect there. Is it a small matter ? And what advantages do you not get there ! You can give just a few paise and you get cooked food for yourself and for all your guests and friends. You will not have to bother for a cook or cooking. And if you pay a little more they will send the *prasada* right to your residence. You are left completely free to devote yourself to your spiritual practices. The temple is so big, you can have quite a quiet corner for yourself anywhere inside it. No one will care or dare to disturb you. If you want a quieter place that also you can get plenty — there is the vast beach. There are *sadhus* of all sects and denominations practising silently their own sadhanas. Oh the holiness of the place ! '

We think the following narration refers to this period — 1895-97 : 'At Calcutta when on some days I could not get any *bhiksha* (alms) I would go to Upenbabu, beg a few coins of him and purchase from a shop *puris* and potato curry and eat them. Through His grace there was no trouble about digestion. Nor had one to be present at a fixed time to get his food from a co-disciple's or devotee's house. If you don't go at that time the members of the house get annoyed. Seeing all this I gave up taking food in any house and started purchasing food from the shops, of course with the devotee's money ; but that did not impair my independence. I was free with my own time and was full of bliss.'

We have it from Sri Akshay Kumar Sen, author of the *Ramakrishna Punthi* that the year he first gave the recital of his *Punthi* at the Dakshineswar Temple Lātu Maharaj was present and attentively heard the recital. It was in 1895. The author told us that Lātu Maharaj was mightily pleased with the recital and enthusiastically said, 'Akshay Babu, you have conferred a great boon on the public, especially on the masses. You have narrated the incidents of the Master's life so simply and so beautifully that even the illiterate masses, and their womenfolk too, will understand them fully.'

In 1896 Lātu Maharaj was found for eight months at a stretch in Mirbahar or Prasanna Kumar Thakur's ghat at Baghbazar. Our reporter was Gaju Bhattacharya. He was known among the devotees of our Master by this name because he came from the village of Gaja. At first he could not recognize Lātu Maharaj inasmuch as he had grown long hairs and beard bristling straight out. He narrated it thus to us : "I found a Sannyasin in the Mirbahar Ghat hearing scriptural recitals very attentively. I used to bow down to him every day at the end of the recitals. He never talked with anybody but sat quietly in a corner. He never asked anything of anyone, nor did he give instruction to any one. One day I told my friend Patal Babu, in the course of a conversation about this peculiar Sannyasin. So he came, not so much to hear the recital, as to see the *sādhu* at Prasanna Kumar Thakur's ghat. The moment he saw the Sannyasin a doubt arose in his mind : 'May he not be our Lātu Maharaj ? ' Recital over we went straight to the *sadhu* and Patal Babu recognized him immediately and asked him : 'Why are you here Maharaj ? Come with us. Don't you know Swamiji is coming very soon to Calcutta ? ' 'When, when is he coming ? ' was Lātu Maharaj's query. We did not know the exact date, so we kept quiet. Observing our silence he muttered something to himself and said, 'Well, let us go'. We gladly took him to our house in Nandaram Sen Lane. Next day we called a barber and got him shaved. He stayed with us for three or four days and then shifted to Balaram Babu's house."

(To be continued)

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SAMADHI: ITS NATURE AND OBSTRUCTIONS IN ITS WAY

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

[This forms a part of a class-talk on *Vivekachudamani* given by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder-leader of the Vedanta Society, Chicago, on April 18, 1935. We are indebted to Mrs. Mallika Clare Gupta, a disciple of the Swami, for making this as well as several other talks available to us.—*Ed.*]

THERE are two different and distinct states of consciousness in which the absolute Truth is enjoyed. One is called the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi, an experience which cannot be expressed in human language. The state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi has never been described by any Seer. Things can be described in terms of quality, dimensions and so on, but in that state the dual consciousness of subject and object are merged into one. There is no 'I' or 'thou'; there is no seer or object seen. Everything becomes one and that oneness cannot be described. Although Sri Ramakrishna made many attempts to describe that state, his words vanished in the course of his description. It has been admitted by all the Hindu philosophers that only Īśvara-Kotis[1] can come back from that state to the ordinary state of consciousness. When a Jīva-Koti[2] enters into that state he never returns. That means the drop falls into the ocean and becomes one with it and cannot come out and take the form of the drop again. In other words, the body of the Jīva-Koti falls off, like a dry leaf. And shall we use the ordinary expression: he 'dies'? No, he does not die. His real Self which has already been separated from the frame goes to the source from which it came. Sri Ramakrishna gave a very suggestive illustration of this. A little salt doll wanted to measure the depth of the ocean. It went to the ocean and stepped into the water, but as soon as it did so it dissolved, and there was no one to measure or to come back! That describes what happens to a Jīva-Koti who reaches that state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi. But such is the great power of the Īśvara-Kotis that although they get into the 'ocean' and become one with it they can again come back and assume their individual forms.

[1] Souls perfect from their very birth.
[2] An ordinary aspirant.

There is another state of Samādhi which one can enjoy the Truth, with modification, at the same time moving about this world of phenomena. This is called the state of Savikalpa Samādhi. The prefix 'sa' means, with, whereas the prefix 'nir' means without, and vikalpa means, modification. In the case of souls who realize this state of Savikalpa Samādhi the quality of their realization is unadulterated, although we may find them appearing to be like ordinary men. However, owing to their understanding of the inner Self the outer expressions do not in any way touch them. Suppose we find such a soul expressing anger, are we then to think that he is not perfect? No, because in the case of such liberated souls the lower self does not really exist; he has completely identified himself with the higher Self. A liberated soul might feel hunger, thirst, and might feel the need of sleep and rest; that, however, does not indicate that his consciousness is identified with the body. He can handle the body, the mind and the emotions as so many instruments. Now, there are two opinions regarding the state of consciousness in which these liberated souls remain before they merge themselves in the Nirvikalpa Samādhi. Sri Ramakrishna described the state of such a liberated soul as that of a Jivanmukta, liberated while living, free while apparently acting like one who is bound. He used the simile of a sword of steel which after being touched by the philosopher's stone is turned into gold. It retains the shape and the form of the steel sword, but since it is turned to gold it cannot do injury to any one. Likewise, a Jivanmukta has touched the 'philosopher's stone' of absolute Consciousness and his entire being has been transformed. He may still retain the size and form of the human body but there is no bondage or imperfection in him. Even Rama-

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krishna moved in the world of phenomena much like any other person. We know, we have direct and unmistakable evidence, that he could go into the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi at will, yet when he was conscious of the world of phenomena he moved about almost like other men. Are we to think then that he was under the bondage of the body, mind and emotions like us. No, he lived and moved in the human form but his consciousness was not identified with it. That is also the state in which a Jivanmukta lives.

There is another opinion which holds that there remains a slight touch of imperfection even in one who has 'touched the philosopher's stone'; that unless and until he has transcended the body and mind in the continuous enjoyment of Nirvikalpa Samādhi he is not absolutely safe. That is, until he has gone into the 'ocean' and has not returned. However, we need not go into these controversies. We may not be able to enjoy a fraction of that Samādhi, but let us endeavour to manifest in our characters a few traits of perfection. In time we will be able to enjoy that state of Samādhi.

In the *Vivekachudamani*, Shankaracharya very rarely refers to the state of a Jivanmukta. He says: Do not stop. Go on and enter into the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi and be absolutely and finally free. Each one of us ought to have that outlook. We should all be in a hurry to reach that state where nothing else exists. We should be able to say: I do not want a thing in this world. I want to remain absorbed in that bliss of Samādhi. We should aim at that. There is one force, however, which might intervene. That is the force of Prārabdha Karma which might lead us into action. If it is one's Prārabdha Karma to remain in the world, even after attaining Samādhi, that force will compel us to do so. We have often discussed this force of Prārabdha Karma in general discussions on Karma. However, you make up your mind to transcend every bit of manifestation and if it is your Karma to do anything, that Karma will work itself out. You do not have to bother about it. Your goal should be to try not to retain the 'I', even in order to 'do good' to humanity.

There is another attitude one may have. Suppose there is a treasure house which contains all sorts of precious jewels and fabulous wealth and you are inspired to discover it, to own it and to live in that treasure house; you do not care for anything else. You have concentrated all your will for the attainment of that. Now, suppose a person says: 'Come with me,' and he takes you to that place. He has the key and he takes you inside and shows you everything. Then he says: 'It is yours. In due course of time you will live here and remain here, but I want you to do something. Do not stay here now. Come out with the clear consciousness that it is yours and move about in this world as I want you to. Later I will give you the key.'

Something very much like that happened between Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda at one time wanted to remain absorbed in Samādhi all the time, but Ramakrishna said: 'I expect something different from you. Why be so anxious to be absorbed in it? It is yours, but I will keep it locked up. In course of time, when you have done Mother's work, I'll give you the key and you will remain there.' The conversation was something like that.

This happened to two giant personalities, but what about us pigmies? We must make up our minds that we do not want anything but absolute freedom; we do not care for the world. If God has created this world and He is not powerful enough to keep it in order, why should we be concerned? That should be our attitude. Our idea of 'doing good to humanity', and so on, is only an alibi for feeding the ego, or eating another dish of 'apple sauce', to use a colloquial expression. In the last analysis it is nothing but that. Only those who are completely unattached can render any service to humanity; others only grind their own axes. We know that everything will go on just the same, even if you or I do not contribute anything. He who can make up his mind that he wants nothing but absolute freedom will attain it. The Guru, or God Himself will come and open the treasure house for him, and if any humanitarian work or service to God or man is to be done by him, it will be collected like taxes. He may

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not be eager to pay, but the taxes will be collected just the same. So if you have anything to do in this world after realization, you will be made to do it.

What are the obstructions to the attainment of this state ? Goodness is an obstruction, sympathy, love, all are obstructions. In the last analysis everything that keeps the 'I' in some form or other is an obstruction. When you love you keep a big 'I'; you do not want to give up that 'I' or the object you love. But two cannot enter there ; there is room only for one. Unity cannot be attained if there is even a little bit of yourself. Ramakrishna gave a beautiful illustration. He compared the 'I' with the thread you want to pass through the eye of a needle. If the thread has any fibres around it you cannot get it into the eye of the needle. You have to press all the fibres into one. What we have to do is to get all the threads together and make them one. It might appear very hard to do, but we must do it sooner or later.

Next is 'discriminating between the real and the unreal'. The unreal takes such a fascinating form that we run after it. We must keep high the torch of discrimination.

Did you ever try to untie the knots of a package ? There are some you can untie without difficulty, but there are others that are very stubborn. There are many knots. If you untie one, another comes. This illustration of knots has been used in the Upaniṣads. It has been said that the knots of the heart are all loosened when the Ātman is realized. The knots of the heart have their home in the ego consciousness. In the 'I am' consciousness are concealed all the entanglements. They have to be untied. Ramakrishna said : Suppose you want to get rid of a rope that is all tangled up, what will you do ? Apply a little spark of fire at one end and it will all be consumed by the fire. Very often the rope though burnt will still retain the same form. But blow on it and it will all be blown away ! The secret is to add a spark at one end — the fire of discrimination.

> The Sannyasin, calm, self-controlled, perfectly retiring from the sense-world, forbearing, and devoting himself to the practice of Samadhi, always reflects on his own self being the Self of the whole universe. Destroying completely by this means the imaginations which are due to the gloom of ignorance, he lives blissfully as Brahman, free from actions and the oscillations of the mind.[3]

Leave out the qualities that qualify the Sannyasin and follow the verb, 'reflects on his own self being the Self of the whole universe'. He never makes the mistake that his self is the body, mind or faculties. His self is everywhere. Suppose something very ugly is presented before you, what will you do ? It is your self, can you hate it ? And suppose there is something very great and wonderful, will you say : 'How little am I' and feel jealous and envious ? How can you. It is yourself. You should rejoice that your Self is so beautiful. 'Calm' : Start reflecting and calmness will come as a matter of course. Why should the sense world attract you ? Do you become infatuated with yourself by looking in a mirror ? No, because you know it is yourself, you are it. When you know that all the beautiful sense objects are nothing but your own reflections — just little reflections of your Self — you admire and enjoy them, but you are not drawn into the fire like a moth and consumed. That is real happiness. Why do you have to go begging for anything ? Sense objects can be admired and enjoyed, knowing that all is a spark of my Self. Or would you be a dualist ? Sri Ramakrishna said : 'My Mother is the Ātman, she is within me ; She is everywhere.' And he would admire and enjoy the beauty of Mother. Sense objects did not exist for him at all.

He is 'forbearing' — enemies, foes, friends, all are your own Self. Are you reconciled to that ? He is 'free from actions'. His body might be active but he does not act. He is the seer ; he enjoys, but he is free from the 'oscillations of the mind'. the swinging of the mind between the two poles, ascertainment and doubt, does not touch him.

[3] *Vivekachudamani*, 355.

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OBITUARY

It is with sorrow that we announce the death of Countess Mabel Colloredo-Mansfeld on Friday, March 26, 1965. She was Secretary of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York from 1956 until her death. After her cancer operation three years ago it was hoped by everyone she would completely recover, but about three months ago the disease recurred, this time affecting her bones and marrow. She died at her father's home in Boston. Since her first cancer operation the Countess had a premonition the disease would be fatal for her and all that while there was never seen a trace of worry or fear in her. A memorial service was held in the Chapel of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center on April 4th. This was attended by a large number of her friends and members of the Center. To fulfil her wish her ashes were sent to Belur Math to be consigned, in front of Holy Mother's Temple, to the Ganges.

Countess Colloredo came from an aristocratic family. On her father's side she was a descendant of the Cameron who was the War Secretary in the Cabinet of President Abraham Lincoln and later, the American Ambassador to Russia. On her mother's side her great uncle was the late Mr. Warren who wrote for the Harvard Oriental series "Buddhism in Translation" which has since become a classic.

She came to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center in 1951 and visited India three times with Swami Nikhilananda and other friends, participating in the Centenary celebrations of Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda. She adopted Hinduism as a religion and was given the name of Nistha. Devoted to the Hindu Deities, she visited almost all the holy places in India from Cape Comorin to Mayavati. The Countess cherished a special affection and respect for all the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order and impressed everyone who met her with the innate nobility, gentleness and charm of her nature. During her last illness the President of the Ramakrishna Order cabled her his special blessings. Her mind was fixed on Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother at the time of her passing away. By her death the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, New York has lost a sincere and untiring worker and the Ramakrishna Mission a devoted friend. May her soul rest in peace!

NOTES AND COMMENTS

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS IN WORK

Man's greed for power and pelf is very great. Perhaps it can be tolerated or suffered if some good comes out of it. For we cannot expect perfection on this earth. People know it, therefore they do not expect all men to be saints. Yet they want them to be considerate, to be conscientious. People are ready to bear the burden provided they get *some* return. Mind, the masses of India are very tolerant. They are satisfied with the least that can be provided for them. They are moved by the least touch of sympathy and consideration. Man may not go out of his way to show sympathy and affection. But let him wherever he is placed work conscientiously and with honesty and that would improve matters to a great extent.

It is an obvious fact that India was short of food grains and the food situation almost reached a crisis some time ago. With the passing away of that emergency by imports, which would heavily deprive the much needed foreign exchange for other development projects, there seems to be settling down

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again a fog of lassitude on all. What with the new crops and imports the situation having eased the people concerned also seem to take everything lightly.

Here is a report which appeared in *The Hindu,* dated April 22, 1965, from their Calicut correspondent :

> Nineteen wagon-loads of rice received at West Hill station here last evening were not taken delivery of by the local Food Corporation officials as the rice was found damaged by rain and unfit for human consumption.
>
> A Food Corporation official explained they did not want to take the risk of taking delivery in the absence of any railway official at the time of unloading.
>
> He said most of the open wagons which contained rice bags were found without tarpaulin cover.
>
> The blame rested on those who had despatched the rice from procuring centres in Andhra and not on railway officials, he said.
>
> The wagons had brought about 1,000 tons of rice, mostly from Andhra.
>
> It is with a view to tiding over rice scarcity during the lean months of June, July and August that the Government of India had arranged to stock as much rice as possible in Central Storage godowns in important centres in Kerala.

It was good that Government took over the distribution of food grains at a critical period to bring down the prices and prevent hoarding. But it requires great care to store or transport food grains. This idea perhaps has not been stressed, otherwise how could rice bags be transported in open wagons as if they were no more than coal or iron. Would a private individual have done it, whatever the urgency may have been ? Certainly not. A loss of thousand tons of rice would have surely ruined an ordinary private dealer and it would have been a great loss even for a big one. Here, if the report is correct there seems to be no urgency at all. The rice was meant for consumption in June, July and August. It could have easily waited another month for transport, for the proper wagons to be available.

The net result is that we are short of a thousand tons of food grains now. A little foresight would have saved the loss. If such waste of food grains were to continue, will it be a surprise if India remained a perpetual importer of food grains and eternal dependent on other countries ? The authorities concerned will do well to properly grasp and tackle the situation before it gets out of hand again.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ESSAYS ON SAMKHYA AND OTHER SYSTEMS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY : By Anima Sen Gupta. Pub. M. Sen, 65/64 Moti Mahal, Kanpur. Pp. 170. Price Rs. 5.00.

In this happy collection of her papers on some of the systems of Philosophy in Indian Thought, the author underlines a certain unity of vision and catholicity of approach that are unmistakable to a dispassionate eye in the development of this ancient tradition. She draws attention to the harmony between the Vedantic conception of the soul and the conception of the Nyaya-Vaisesika school. She brings out features that are common between Shankara Advaita and the Visishtadvaita of Ramanuja.

Some have asked whether Vivekananda's stress on work and service is not a departure from the Vedanta of Shankara which the Swami preached so fervently. Dr Sen Gupta draws a distinction between service as an obligatory duty — religious or social — and service as a spontaneous manifestation in action of an inner plenitude : it is *karma* that does not bind, but frees both the doer and those for whom it is done.

The author clears some popular misconceptions about Indian spirituality current in the West and points out how philosophy in India has always been a hand-maiden of spirituality.

A progressive contribution to modern Thought.

M. P. PANDIT

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU : Publisher : The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi. Price Rs. 1.50.

This is a handsome album depicting Jawaharlal Nehru in various moods, in various situations and with different types of people bringing out his lively personality. A good memorial for the great leader.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MADRAS.
DHANUSHKODI CYCLONE RELIEF

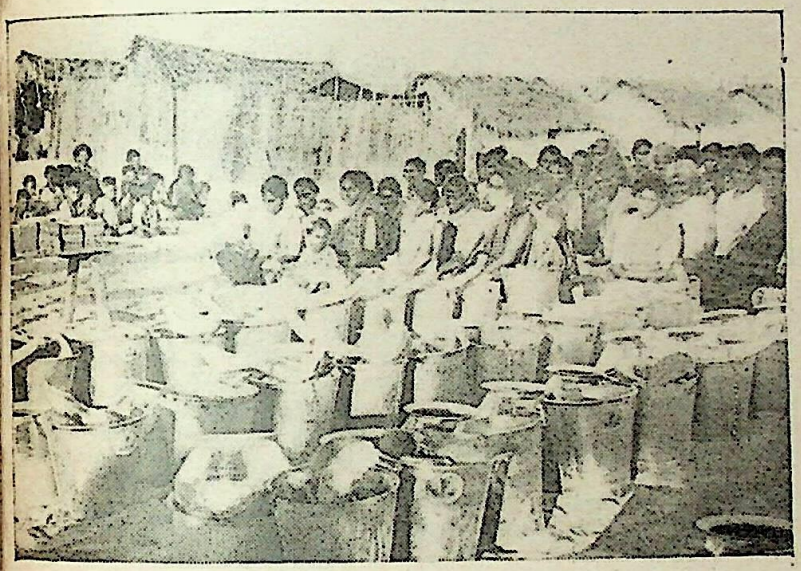
A Brief Report

The relief work, for the people displaced and affected during the cyclone of 22nd December 1964 at Dhanushkodi and Rameswaram Island, which was started in the first week of January by the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras was wound up recently. 4 Sanyasins and a Brahmacharin from Madras and two Sanyasins from the Headquarters were deputed to conduct the relief operations at the two centres: Uchipulli, on the mainland, and at Rameswaram on the Rameswaram Island. Two devotees from Madras also took part in the relief operations at the centres.

A batch of volunteers from the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaickenpalayam enlisted themselves for the work during the early period of the operations for about a month and a half. The Vidyalaya also lent a jeep for the work.

SRI RAMAKRISHNAPURAM COLONY

(near Rameswaram Road, Inaugurated on 7th April, 1965)



A view of the settlers with the household materials before distribution. (The huts are seen in the background).

A view after distribution of the materials.

In all 76 villages (57 around Uchipulli and 19 on the Rameswaram Island) were inspected and 2,054 (1,406 at Uchipulli and 648 at Rameswaram) families were enlisted for giving relief. Out of these 1,491 families (962 at Uchipulli and 529 at Rameswaram) were given building materials and all other requirements. The rest of the families were given clothing, cooking vessels, pasting stones, buckets etc. (details of which are given below) according to their needs. All the people who worked (mostly those who were rebuilding their own hutments) were paid wages in the form of rice during the construction period.

A colony of 57 hutments was built near Rameswaram Road (about 3 miles from Rameswaram) named Sri Ramakrishnapuram for people from Thavakkadu, who had lost their all, every material possession, including their dwelling houses in the cyclone. 3 wells have been dug for the convenience of these settlers in the colony. The hutments were given over to the families formally on April 7, 1965, following a solemn function held for the occasion.

The function in connection with the opening of the new colony was held at the Vivekananda Sangham building, a community hall of the colony, on the morning of the 7th April. It started with the distribution of vessels, buckets, clothes, lanterns etc., required for a new household to all the 57 families. The Swamis then addressed them to be united among themselves and devoted to God, to observe the rules of hygiene and be pure in body and mind. Afterwards Arati was performed for the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda which were decorated in the hall. After this the would-be settlers of the colony all clad in their clean and new clothes, carrying the

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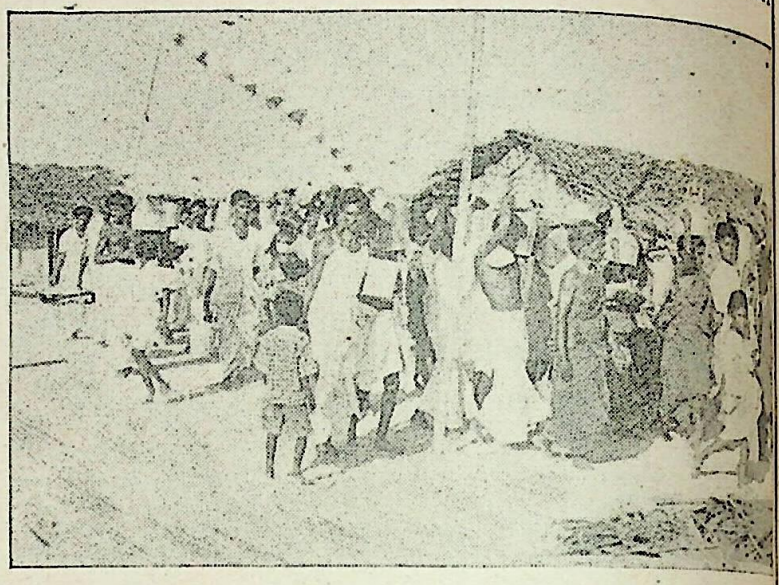
household materials, given them, on their heads went round the 3 streets of the colony in a procession with Nathaswaram and Bhajan. On the second round each family entered the house allotted to it—after purification of the huts by sprinkling of the holy Ganges water by one of the Swamis—with all ceremony. With this the function concluded.

The Mission also got a well dug for the benefit of the Dhanushkodi settlers at Rameswaram Road. A common hall named Swami Sivananda Sangham was also built for their daily gathering and other common communing.

The Mission conveys their thanks to the Government of Madras who had placed a jeep at their disposal, and supplied rice at controlled price, during the period. They also thank the Railway Board for issuing 2 passes and arranging for free transport of materials on the Railways to the relief camps. Their thanks are also due to the authorities of the Rameswaram Temple for allowing them to stay in the Temple Rest House during the period of the Relief work. The Mission conveys their thanks to all other individuals, associations and firms who had been helpful and had associated with the Mission in the relief work in various ways, such as donations, by active service and the like.



The settlers of the Colony carrying the things to their homes (huts constructed for them by the Mission).

	Uchipulli	Rameswaram
Number of beneficiaries		
Adults	2,932	1,445
Children	2,663	1,614
Total ..	5,595	3,059

Materials Distributed:

Leaves (Cudgens)	4,47,140	
Bamboos (big and small)	41,763	
Bamboo splits	1,491	Bundles.
Cocoanut fibre	217	Bundles.
Dhotis	2,201	
Sarees	2,496	
Children's garments	5,658	Metres.
Buckets	400	
Pasting stones	243	
Hurricane lanterns	476	
Combs	150	
Mirrors	120	
Bamboo mats	398	
Iron Vegetable Dressers	241	
Vessels	2,583	
Slates	192	
Rice	5,202	Litres.
Blankets	500	
Iron ovens	122	
Cement Ringwalls	20	
Readymade garments	92	
Mortars	9	

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS.

Report for 1964-1965

The Home has under its management four distinct sections: The High School, the Collegiate, the Technical and the Elementary. The strength in the different sections of the Home as on 31-3-1965 was as shown below: High School 154, Oriental School 2, Pre-University and Degree Courses 28 and L.M.E. Course 109, in all 293.

Of the number of boarders, 74 belonged to Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes.

In the S.S.L.C. Public Examination of March 1964, 37 pupils appeared and 35 were declared eligible for College courses.

Four students appeared for the B.Sc. examination and all of them passed, two in the first class. In P.U.C. examination all the eleven students who appeared were successful, six of them getting first class.

In the Technical Section all of the 36 students that appeared in the First Year Examination passed; and in the final year out of the 28 that appeared 20 came out successful with 16 in the first class.

The Ramakrishna Centenary Elementary School run under the auspices of the Home had a strength of 403 (228 boys and 175 girls).

Ramakrishna Mission Higher Elementary School, Mallaiankaranai had on its roll 149 boys and 25 girls and the staff consisted of 8 members including the Headmaster. The hostel attached to the school had 44 boarders belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Backward Communities.

The management acknowledges the generous help, sympathy and co-operation of friends and well wishers and thanks them all.

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LII JUNE 1965 No. 2

PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

सदासीदिति शब्दार्थभेदे वैगुण्यमापतेत्। अभेदे पुनरुक्तिस्स्यान्मैवं लोके तथेक्षणात् ॥ ३६ ॥

Sat, Existence ; *āsīt,* existed ; *iti,* in this (statement) ; *śabdārthabhedé,* if there is difference between the meanings of the two words ; *vaiguṇyaṁ,* imperfection (in the doctrine of Advaita) ; *āpatet,* will result ; *abhedé,* in non-difference ; *punarukti,* defect of tautology ; *syāt,* will attach. *Maivaṁ,* you should not say so ; *loké,* in the world ; *tathā,* such uses ; *īkṣaṇāt,* being noticed.

36. In the statement "Existence existed" (*sadāsīt*), if there is difference of meaning between the two words then the doctrine of Advaita (non-duality) will be defective ; if, (on the other hand) there is non-difference in their meaning then there will attach to it the defect of tautology. You should not say so. For in the world (too) such uses[1] are noticed.

[1] *Such uses* : Where the words with the same meaning are repeated without being accused of the defect of tautology.

NOTE : The next verse cites instances where words are used without being considered tautological.

कर्तव्यं कुरुते वाक्यं ब्रूते धार्यस्य धारणम्। इत्यादिवासनाविष्टं प्रत्यासीत्सदितीरणम् ॥ ३७ ॥

Kartavyaṁ, action that is to be done (duty) ; *kuruté,* does ; *vakyaṁ,* sentence ; *brūté,* speaks ; *dhāryasya,* what is to be worne ; *dhāraṇaṁ,* wearing ; *ityādi,* and the like ; *vāsanāviṣṭaṁ-prati,* to a person burdened with the impressions of the world ; *sat,* existence ; *āsīditi,* existed ; *īraṇaṁ,* twice (telling).

37. The sentences like : He does what is to be done (duty) ; he speaks sentences ; he is wearing what is to be worne (are the instances in question).[1] To (instruct) a person, (therefore), who is burdened with the impressions of the worldly knowledge the words were repeated twice.[2]

[1] The instances given here are sentences where repetition of words with the same meaning occurs without being stigmatised as tautological.

[2] *Repeated twice* : An aspirant is to be taught according to his capacity to absorb, is an age-old practice of the Hindu sages. So to one who is accustomed to the language

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used in the world, this repetition was done in order that he may be able to grasp the purport of the Scriptures easily — that is the meaning.

NOTE: The next verse explains why (*agre*) "in the beginning" was used by the Sruti when there is no conception of time in the Non-dual Being.

कालाभावे पुरेत्युक्तिः कालवासनया युतम्। शिष्यं प्रत्येव तेनात्र द्वितीयं नहि शंक्यते॥ ३८॥

Kālābhāvé, in the absence of distinction of time (in the Being); *purā-ityuktiḥ,* the saying "in the past"; *kālavāsanayā,* with the conception of time; *yutaṁ,* aware of; *śiṣyaṁ-prati-eva,* to the disciple alone; *tena,* by that; *atra,* in the Being; *dvitīyaṁ,* a second one; *nahi śaṅkyaté,* (is) not doubted.

38. In the absence of distinction of time in the Being, the words "in the past" have been used only to instruct the disciple who is acutely aware of the conception of time. By this it should not be concluded that a second one* is being doubted in respect of the Being.

* *A second one* here means Time.

चोद्यं वा परिहारो वा क्रियतां द्वैतभाषया। अद्वैतभाषया चोद्यं नास्ति नापि तदुत्तरम्॥ ३९॥

Codyaṁ vā, either question; *parihāro vā,* or answer; *dvaitabhāṣayā,* in the language of duality; *kriyatāṁ,* let it be done; *advaitabhāṣayā,* in the language of non-duality; *codyaṁ,* question; *nāsti,* is not; *taduttaraṁ api,* its reply also; *na,* is not.

39. Let questioning and answering be done in the language of duality. For in the language of non-duality there is neither question nor its reply.*

* The above is the literal meaning of the text. The purport, however is: 'When man is on the plane of duality, when he sees another and acts suitably, there would be doubts and replies; but when one reaches the plane of the Non-dual Being there is neither question nor its answer. The Non-dual Reality cannot be expressed.' यतो वाचो निवर्तन्तेऽप्राप्य मनसा सह। 'From where speech with the mind turns back without knowing,' says the Sruti. But, for explaining this to the seeker, language of duality is to be had recourse to.

तदा स्तिमितगम्भीरं न तेजो न तमस्ततम्। अनाख्यमनभिव्यक्तं सत्किञ्चिदवशिष्यते॥ ४०॥

Tadā, then (in the state of non-duality); *stimitaṁ,* motionless (fixed); *gambhīraṁ,* deep (imponderable); *na tejaḥ,* neither luminous; *na tamaḥ,* nor dark; *tataṁ,* all-pervading; *anākhyaṁ,* indescribable; *anabhivyaktaṁ,* not perceivable by the senses; *sat,* Existence (different from void); *kiñcit,* inexpressible; *avaśiṣyaté,* remains.

40. Then, (in the state of non-duality) an inexpressible Being — (different from void) motionless, deep (imponderable), neither of the nature of luminosity nor of darkness, yet all-pervading, indescribable, and unperceivable by the senses — remains.*

* This is how the Scriptures describe that Being — this is the meaning.

NOTE: Next verse onwards the text deals with the doubts of the Naiyayikas.

ननु भूम्यादिकं मा भूत्परमाण्वन्तनाशतः। कथं ते वियतोऽसत्त्वं बुद्धिमारोहतीति चेत्॥ ४१॥

Nanu, well; *bhūmyādikaṁ,* the four elements beginning with *prithivī*; *paramāṇvanta-nāśataḥ,* which end in the *paramāṇu* (atom), being subject to decay; *mā-bhūt,* let they be not (before creation); *viyataḥ,* of the *ākāśa,*

(*Continued on Page* 118)

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LORD BUDDHA AND HIS MIDDLE PATH

THE life of Gautama, the Buddhà is a beacon that has been shedding light undimmed for two and a half millenniums now, informing, inspiring and illuminating people, and will continue to do so till man values more something higher than the things of the mundane world, till man cares even a little for a righteous kind of life, till man loves to live a peaceful life, nay till man exists. For it was a life of sacrifice intensely lived, in which there was no disparity between the things spoken and things done. It was a life which knew no fear, made no distinction between the high and the low.

Buddha did not lay much stress on the abstruse metaphysical side of philosophy. Perhaps, he thought he should give a practical demonstration of a good life for ages to come than dwell on mere speculation. This trend of his thought is discernible in his reply to the question regarding the existence of the soul. He asks: 'Will you, if you find a man pierced with an arrow, first try to investigate by what hunter it was shot, of what poison it was tipped and so on indefinitely or relieve the sufferer of his miseries by extracting the arrow out and applying soothing balms to the wound?' 'Man' he seems to say, 'is burning in the miseries of this world, show him the path out of it and leave alone all other dry discussions.' His life, therefore, as a most rational one appeals to one and all, starting with the unbelievers, the agnostics and the atheists up to the trustful and the religious. Whatever doctrinal differences, may there have been or still be between his followers and those of other faiths, it cannot be denied that his life has still a charm which thrills people, moves them to the core of their very being. It almost resembles a lyrical song taking you along its current of melodies, now making you see into the depths of despair at his struggle, now lifting you up, on to the crest of joy at his enlightenment, now moving you to tears at the readiness of the Blessed One to sacrifice his life to save that of a lamb, and again making you stand in awe at the sternness in his desire of maintaining the purity of his creed, free of all miracle-mongering.

What pity and compassion must have flowed in those veins, what intense sufferings should have been felt in that heart to be moved so! Here we find the ununderstandable Upaniṣadic saying, *(sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma)* "all this is verily Brahman," being literally lived and that not as a practice, but spontaneously as a result of the realization of the Unity of Being.

II

Now let us make a brief survey of his life, a detailed one being beyond our scope at present. Most of the accounts of Buddha's life that we get is from *Lalitavistara* and such other Pali Canons.

The Buddha is the name by which Siddhartha, the Gautama, was known after his enlightenment. He was born in the year 563 B.C. to the provincial king Suddhodana and his queen Maya, of Kapilavasthu, a township in the plains near the foot-hills of Nepal. Foretold, that his son when grown to manhood would either become a powerful king or moved by the woes of the world turn a religious leader, king Suddhodana in order to avoid the latter tragedy, as he considered it, brought up his son away from the three woes of the world: disease, old age and death. When Siddhartha grew into manhood, the father desiring to bind him securely to wealth and kingdom, had him married to a girl of his choice, named Yasodhara, beautiful and loving and virtuous. They had a lovely child who was named Rahula. Suddhodana was now feeling a little secure as he thought the resonpsibility of the family and love for his wife and child would hold Siddhartha back.

The wheel of time rolled on. Meanwhile, destiny seemed to have been laughing in its

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sleeves when the king was endeavouring, vainly, to entangle Siddhartha in the world. Siddhartha, now, desirous to know his people set forth from his palace in his chariot. And as if Providence was lying in wait, just for this moment, to strike and strike hard to shock into rude awakingness Siddhartha's consciousness, which was till then kept in the dark about the real state of affairs of the world. He came across the very three phenomena which the king had all the time kept away from his son. He saw on his way an old man, bent double, made feeble by ravages of time, dragging his burden of the body with great effort. He learnt from his charioteer that that was the way of all mankind, that this same old man was once a joyous, sportive youth but that time had worked its way and reduced him to that state. Then he saw a palsied man, with some fingers of his hands missing, lying on the road side writhing in pain. To Siddhartha's feeling inquiry regarding the man Channa, the Charioteer, explained that the man was stricken with disease. Disease he said comes to human beings in several forms but none knew how. Then Siddhartha came face to face with a dead body being carried on the hearse. To Siddhartha's enquiring glance Channa said that was the end of all human beings; that those who were born had to die one day. Each of these sights had thrown Siddhartha into deeper and deeer contemplation. He was sad. Was there no way out of these triple woes? thought he. As if to show him the way he next met a Sannyasin, serene and self-possessed and dignified, carrying a beggar's bowl. Siddhartha was impressed and asked Channa who that person might be who could be so calm, and learnt that it was a monk who had 'abandoned all longings and led a life of austerity and lived without passion or envy and begged his daily food'. Siddhartha mused within himself, "well, that seems to be the course of life set for me"; "to become religious has ever been praised by the wise and this shall be my refuge and the refuge of others and shall yield the fruit of life, and immortality!"

He drove back to the palace brooding, unheedful of anything, and when the palace was plunged in the calmness of the night his resolve was made. Bidding farewell to his sleeping wife and child Siddhartha rode forth followed by Channa till he had covered a great distance and then putting off his royal robes and jewels, sent Channa back to the palace and himself went into homelessness. He had then reached the age of twenty-nine.

His first encounter after this great renunciation was with the king of Magadha, Bimbisara. Siddhartha who had gone on his begging round into the city of Rajagriha had attracted attention of the people. When the king came to know of it he went to the place where Siddhartha was and impressed by the beauty of his person and nobility of his bearing, offered to bestow upon him the whole kingdom. Siddhartha refused to have anything to do with the worldly empire but promised the king to teach him his way when he had found it.

From here he proceeded to the hermitage of Ālāra Kālāma, a renowned teacher of the time, and became his disciple and learnt the art of meditation from him. But not satisfied with the metaphysical part of his teachings he retired to a forest and practised austerities, of fasting and mortification, for years until his body was like a withered branch. At the end of six years he considered the state of his mind sitting under a Jambu tree. Mortification had weakened his body and yet he was not in sight of enlightenment. He thought of abandoning the path of fasting and went and bathed in a river but he was so weak that he could not rise from the stream. With great effort he struggled out but on the way to his abode he fell down in a swoon. His companions, the five monks, thought he was dead. But he revived and then he resolved to beg his food, that his health and strength may be restored. Seeing that Siddhartha had broken his fast without attaining enlightenment the monks left him. Now, the daughter of the village headman of Uruvela where Siddhartha was practising his austerities had desired that the great Sakya Muni would deign to receive food from her.

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So on the day he was to attain enlightenment she had a pre-vision. She, therefore, carried a bowl of thickened milk cooked with rice and offered it to the Great One. Siddhartha took the bowl, went to the river, took his bath and having partaken of the food and refreshed his limbs made the greatest resolve: 'Let my body dry up, my skin and my nerves and my bones waste away, yet this body will not move from this seat until I have attained Supreme Enlightenment, which is difficult of attainment even after aeons.'[1] Various were the temptations that came to him at that time, yet he overcame them all and as the dawn approached Siddhartha attained to Supreme Enlightenment, became the Buddha.

It is said that the Blessed One remained in that state for 49 days enjoying the bliss of emancipationn. On the forty-ninth day two merchants who were passing by saw his majestic figure full of peace and were moved to make an offering of food to the Blessed One. The Buddha accepted their offering and pointed out to them the way of salvation and they became his first lay disciples.

Now the Buddha deeply pondered whether he should teach what he had realized. For he thought the worldlings will not understand the truth because their happiness was in bodily enjoyments. Yet he felt an inner urge that the Truth so dearly earned should not be lost. And then he remembered his five disciples and coming to know that they were living at Isipatana near Banaras he wended his way there. The monks saw their former master approach but resolved not to show him any respect, as he had broken his vow of fasting. But as the Blessed One approached them they involuntarily rose from their seats in spite of their resolution, bowed down to him and offered him a seat and he taught them. That was his first sermon. To them he taught the ineffectiveness of useless austerities and exhorted them to follow the middle path which he had discovered.

By now he had already a good number of monks in his retinue. From Banaras he went to Rajagriha, to King Bimbisara, and received him into his fold, and preached his Dharma. From Rajagriha the Buddha made for Kapilavasthu being invited by his father. There he converted the Sākya Princes to his Dharma and received his son Rahula—who taught by his mother Yaśodhara, had claimed his patrimony — into the Order. Much later at Vesali he decided to admit women into the Order at the prayer of Ānanda who had witnessed a group of earnest women, sore of foot due to walking, and laden with dust, had come to beg of the Tathagata to be ordained as nuns.

For forty-five years the Blessed One travelled, preached and taught the way to salvation. He had now 1200 disciples who were monks. He had a great following among the lay men and women too. Now, when he was full of years (he was then eighty) and his mission was fulfilled the Blessed One proceeded to Pāra where he accepted the hospitality of Canda, a smith. But the Buddha was attacked by a fell disease soon after he partook of the meal offered by Canda and was in great pain. Yet, mindful and self-possessed the Buddha bore it without complaint. He then proceeded to Kusinara and halted in a Sāla grove. Growing weary he asked Ananda, his disciple and attendant, to spread his couch between two Sāla trees and lay down on his right side.

And as the last moments drew near lo, a seeker came and wanted to be taught and he approached Ananda. But Ananda refused permission to allow him to go to the Blessed One, knowing that the Master was weary and was not to be troubled. However, Buddha who overheard their conversation and knowing that the seeker was sincere caused the man to be brought and dissipated all his doubts. Thus did the Buddha teach every sincere seeker till the last breath of his life. The Blessed One's

[1] इहासने शुष्यतु मे शरीरं
त्वगस्थि मांसं प्रलयञ्च यातु ।
अप्राप्य बोधिं बहु कल्प दुर्लभां
नैवासनात्कायमतश्चलिष्यति ।

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last exhortation to the Brethren was: "Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence."

III

Now we come to the teachings of the Buddha of which we shall discuss here only about the middle path. A lot of confusion has arisen in the interpreting of this path and passage of time has not helped to remove these misunderstandings. Rather people were and are still not in a mood to break the cherished images of their own interpretation of these teachings. People are apt to forget that a great spiritual Master's exhortations cannot be construed properly except in the light of his own life. Secondly, we have also to consider the times in which the Master lived and the context in which he spoke the particular words.

We have, as it has come down to us in translation, the Blessed One's teachings on the middle path as follows:

"The Tathagata," said the Buddha, "does not seek salvation *in* austerities, but neither does he for that reason indulge in worldly pleasures, nor live in abundance. The Tathagata has found the middle path.

"There are two extremes, O monks, which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow — habitual practice, on the one hand, of self indulgence which is unworthy, vain and fit only for the worldly-minded; and the *habitual* practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification, which is painful, useless and unprofitable" [2]

The Buddha continues:

"By suffering, the emaciated devotee produces confusion and sickly thoughts in his mind. Mortification is not conducive even to worldly knowledge; how much less to a triumph over the senses!"[3]

First of all, we have to understand that fasting and mortification of the flesh was considered at that time *the* way to salvation. If we recollect what has been said earlier we shall find that the Buddha gave his first sermon to his disciples who had deserted him when he took to begging after being faint with fasting and mortification. The impression of the disciples that he had broken his vow by taking food and was no more a Muni but a man of the world was so great that when they saw him after his enlightenment they addressed him as "Brother", as an equal, and not as their Master. This false notion was to be counter-acted. For the Buddha had come as a saviour and he could not but drive out false notions that were prevalent in his time to save religion from total annihilation. He had to speak the truth and in forceful language too, fitting the occasion that it demanded. Again, mortification was not the goal of man, whereas people of those times saw salvation only *in* it. Mortifications were, if anything, only the means. Was not then the goal forgotten in vaingloriousness of austerity? That is why the Buddha exhorts how difficult it is to triumph over the senses by mere austerity, which makes man weak and unable to know even the ordinary things of life. Who was a better authority of what is conducive to salvation than the one who had attained enlightenment himself? But the Buddha warns, those who may swing to the other extreme, "Sensuality is enervating; the self-indulgent man is slave to his passions, and pleasure seeking is degrading and vulgar". Yet he does not want to leave undefined what he has got to say about his middle path. So he continues: "But to satisfy the necessities of life is not evil. To keep the body in good health is a duty, for otherwise we shall not be able to trim the lamp of wisdom, and keep our mind strong and clear.

"This is the middle path that keeps aloof from the extremes." [4]

Those who stop with the Tathagata's instructions regarding austerity and follow not his later injunctions are in a graver danger of losing their foothold on the spiritual path than the others. This is to be remembered by all

2 3 & 4 *Gospel of Buddhism* by Paul Carus, pp. 41 and 42. Pub: The Publication Department, Government of India, Delhi.

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aspirants. Further, we have to consider the meaning of every word of his sayings quoted above. There is the word "habitual" qualifying practice of austerities, which we have put in italics, to show that it is not at all against the injunctions of the Buddha to observe fasts and vigils, occasionally without injuring the body. The idea behind the Tathagatha's instructions is clear and unambiguous and should not be twisted to suit our needs. Lest people should be led away by his denunciation of austerities the Buddha remarks: "Let him be moderate, let him eat and drink according to the needs of the body." The "needs of the body" again may be a dangerous term. For in the present times our needs have a tendency of increasing in a telescopic manner. But our ancient idea was, as Swami Vivekananda puts it, 'with how little can we keep the body trim and not with how much can we be content'.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* too gives an almost identical teaching : " Yoga cannot be practised by one who indulges in eating nor by one who completely abstains from food ; neither can it be practised by one given to too much sleep nor by one who wakes up all the time. To one who is moderate in his food and rest, moderate in his physical exertions, moderate in sleep and wakefulness yoga becomes easy of practice and a dispeller of miseries."[5] Of course, this does not mean there is no stage when man can abstain from food. The Buddha, himself, if we have to believe in tradition, was without any food for 49 days after his enlightenment, immersed in the joy of that bliss. In our own times Sri Ramakrishna lived in that state for six months without being aware, of what went on round him, even of his body. Providentially, however, a wandering monk who happened to come to Dakshineswar at that time and comprehended the real state through which Sri Ramakrishna was passing, administered food unto him sometimes even by beating Sri Ramakrishna's person to bring his mind down to the normal plane. But these are exceptional cases where illumination had been attained first. Perhaps, the needs of the body are not so exacting in that state as when man is on the normal plane. But for all others who are still aspirants the middle path prescribed by the *Gītā,* reinforced by the Buddha and reiterated by Sri Ramakrishna is the safest guide.

Sri Ramakrishna, when he was told that a certain person had given up fish and betel leaf, is said to have remarked, 'What has poor betel leaf and fish done? Let him give up lust and gold'. The meaning is, that lust and avarice are the two greatest impediments on the spiritual path. If one performs austerities and yet retains longings for enjoyment here or hereafter he will not be able to attain salvation. Let us not jump to any conclusion without understanding the purport of this teaching. Observe how like a hawk Sri Ramakrishna kept his watchful eyes on his disciples. Sri Ramakrishna was very particular even as to what food, and how much of it each of his boy-disciples took, and never failed to reprimand them if it was more than the needs of the body of the particular individual. That is the middle path which the Buddha also taught. Let us remember this always and be not led astray either way.

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[5] नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।
न चाति स्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैवचार्जुन ।
युक्ताहार विहारस्य युक्त चेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्त स्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ।

Bhagavad Gita, VI. 16 & 17.

Earnestness is the path of immortality (Nirvana), thoughtlessness the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.

Having understood this clearly, those who are advanced in earnestness delight in earnestness, and rejoice in the knowledge of the Ariyas (the elect).

These wise people, meditative, steady, always possessed of strong powers, attain to Nirvana, the highest happiness.

— *Dhammapada,* Chapter I. 21 to 23.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

WE have heard it from Lātu Maharaj himself that Śantiram Babu pressed him very much to stay at Balaram Babu's house : 'When I used to stay on the bank of the Ganges and subsisted on *puri* and potato curry or fried gram, one day Śantiram Babu pressed me hard and said, "Why Maharaj, should you not stay with us? You should." I told him patiently, "You know, Śanti Babu, I have no fixed time for anything — bath, food, etc. Why should you court so much inconvenience for me unnecessarily? I am quite happy with my puri and curry purchased from the bazar." Do you know what reply he gave? He said : "Ours is such a big family, we incur such heavy expenditure. If out of this the cost of one *pav* of rice and one *pav* of wheat flour is wasted, would it be too much? You need not bother about all that. They will keep your food, noon and night, in your room. You will take it at your convenience. There will be no difficulty on either side." I had not the heart to say "no" to him after all that. Śantiram Babu showed real fraternal love towards me. It was this love of his that tied me down to him.'

Lātu Maharaj's stay at Balaram Babu's house at the end of 1896 is further proved by the fact that it was from here that he went to the Calcutta port to give a hearty send-off to Swami Abhedananda, who, at the call of Swami Vivekananda, was proceeding to London. They took a group photo of all the Sannyasins present there and Lātu Maharaj was one of them. We heard from his own mouth that from the port he returned to Balaram Babu's house.

Swami Vivekananda returned to Calcutta on February 18, 1897. The same day he went, at noon, to Paśupati Babu's house. There his *gurubhais* and others went to meet him, but Lātu Maharaj did not go. So Swamiji asked his *gurubhais* where Lātu Maharaj was. Learning that he was in the crowd the Swami tried to find him out. Vibhuti Babu heard about what followed next from Lātu Maharaj himself. We quote it below : 'When Swamiji returned from the West there were some Western disciples of his in his company. Thinking the Swami might have developed some sort of egotism at having some Westerners as his disciples I did not go to meet him. But Swamiji searched me out and talked with me. He asked, "All the others came, why did you not come?" I replied, "Now you have Western disciples, men and women; would you have remembered me, I thought". Hearing this he caught hold of my hand and said, "Lātu dear, you are my same old brother Lātu and I am your same old Loren". Then I fully realized that he remembered us even in the same way as before; fame and position had not made any dent in his love for us. He invited me to lunch and said "Let us go to lunch, you will sit by my side". At that I sat down next to him and took our meal. But what talks they had! All rubbish. They, quite a good number, went on inquiring about the manners of the Western people. Did any one ask about that power through whose magic all those things, (his wonderful speeches and the success of his mission) had happened? None. Swamiji also said the same thing when we were alone : "Did you observe how shallow novelty-hunters all these people were? Not even one asked about the power which made all these possible. Everybody thinks that it was I who did these. Little do they know, but for His grace and power not an iota of all that would have happened." I was left with no doubt that Swamiji's mind was unsullied by pride. Moreover, I noticed that he discarded, soon after his arrival at Calcutta, the costly Western dress and started donning a two-rupee worth chaddar and two rupees-and-a-half worth shoes as before. He threw away the

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the four winds his great name and fame, as if they never came to him.'

The same evening Swamiji came to Gopal Lal Seal's garden-house at Cossipore. He took Goodwin and the Saviers with him, and having made all arrangement for their stay there, he himself returned to Balaram Babu's house.

'About ten days (February 28, 1897) after Swamiji's arrival at Calcutta they organized a very big meeting in the courtyard of the palace of the Raja of Sobhabazar. That was the first time I heard Swamiji's lecture. I found that his power to enthuse people with noble sentiments and rouse them to philanthropic activities had increased enormously. For I actually saw that the audience was electrified as he spoke,' said Lātu Maharaj.

On the occasion of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday celebration that year Lātu Maharaj was present at Dakshineswar. He himself narrated what he saw that day. 'Hearing that Swamiji had returned from the West quite a large number of people came to see him. On the celebration day the concourse of people was so great that the big courtyard and the gardens were literally packed to the full. There we saw Girish Babu sitting at the Panchavati. The moment Swamiji saw him he prostrated before him, his Western disciples gazing on the scene. Girish Babu also bowed down to Swamiji. Pointing to Girish Babu he said something in English to his Western disciples. When Swamiji left the place someone from the audience passed a remark on him, which annoyed Girish Babu bitterly. Said he, "These rogues will not be great themselves, nor will they allow others to rise. Do you think they have any future? Master used to say, 'They (i.e. Naren and other boy disciples of his) are the fresh yellow butter churned before sunrise, totally untouched by the sun's rays'. Even if my eyes see them doing any wrong thing, I would rather disbelieve my eyes than blame them. They are the lump of butter that will never mix with water though kept long in it. I am ready to pluck out my eyes that are audacious to see faults in them." Just see what an amount of faith Girish Babu had in brother Loren.'

'Many of the brother disciples were, one day, sitting and talking in the Alambazar Math when all on a sudden brother Loren turned to brother Śaśi and asked him, "Śaśi, how deep is your love for me?" "Very, very deep indeed." "Can you do whatever I would ask you to?" "Yes, of course." "Then do one thing. From the crowded junction of the Fowzdari Balakhana at Chitpur purchase a fresh soft loaf of bread for me." The Swami wanted to test brother Śaśi. Śaśi was born in an orthodox Brahmin family, and was himself noted for his orthodoxy. Swamiji wanted to see if he suffered from any inhibition. Śaśi undoubtedly was a scrupulous follower of scriptural injunctions, but that did not make him look down upon anyone. So brother Śaśi, with smiles playing on his lips, went and purchased bread from a Muslim shop at 5 p.m. when there was a record crowd on the streets and handed it over to Swamiji. Brother Vivekananda was highly pleased when he saw Śaśi handing over the bread to him. He caressed him a little and then said, "Brother, you will have to go to Madras and establish a centre there". Without uttering a word Śaśi left for Madras — Śaśi, a *sadhu*, who did not even want to pay a visit to the holy city of Benares! So great was his love for brother Loren.

'When brother Śaśi left for Madras brother Baburam took up the duty of worshipping the Master at the Ālambazar Math and Tulsi of going to Calcutta for purchases, collection of money etc. At that time Mahāpurush Maharaj also went somewhere, I don't know where, at the request of brother Loren.'

Lātu Maharaj returned to Balaram Babu's house the day Swami Vivekananda left Gopal Seal's garden house for Darjeeling. Lātu Maharaj occupied the room which Ramdayal Babu had been using. But Lātu Maharaj was not present there when Swami Vivekananda after his return from Darjeeling convened a meeting of the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna in which he explained his idea about esta-

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blishing the Ramakrishna Mission. We heard this from Lātu Maharaj himself. But he heard all that had happened that day afterwards. One day while discussing the ideas and ideals of the Mission he told us the following :

'One day brother Yogin told brother Loren, "To hold meetings, to deliver lectures, to do good to people — these are Western ideas that lead to egotism. I don't think it is what we learnt from the Master." Hearing this the Swamiji grew grave and said, "How do you know these are not the Master's ideas? Infinite are the ideas of our great Master. Do you want to keep him limited within your narrow intellect? I will not allow that. I will break all limitations and broadcast his liberal ideas to the world. He never asked me to preach worshipping his photo. Meditation, prayer and realizing the high, noble, life-giving ideas of his in our own life are what he taught us and also to broadcast these ideas to the wide world. You, perhaps are thinking, I am going to found a new sect — not at all. Blessed are we that we got shelter at his holy feet! We are born to scatter these wonderful ideas of his to all alike without any reservation. Look here, brother, indications of his grace in abundance I have felt times without number; I have felt too intensely that it is he who, standing at my back, has been forcing me to do all these. In those days, when stricken with hunger, I fell unconscious on a narrow bridle path in the Himalayas, when I had not had a rag to cover my loins, when without a pie in my pocket I planned to go to the West—in all these circumstances I felt an abundant shower of his grace; again, when, to have just a look at me, this Vivekananda, the wide streets of America could not contain the milling crowds, then equally did he shower his grace on me and I could keep my head cool under the maddening impact of honour and respect bordering on worship. It is through his grace that success followed me everywhere. Now I want to do something for this country. Give up doubting, gird up your loins and help me in this great task; through his grace it will produce a wonderful crop of commonweal". Hearing this brother said, "All along we have been following you; but, truth to tell, doubts assail us now and then. We have seen the Master following a different method and we are afraid if we are deviating from his path. What I told you are only words of caution". The Swami said in reply, "Our Master is not so little as you think of him. Wonderful is his life, infinite are his ideas. Who can say he has understood him? He is *non pareil*. Nothing finite can contain the infinite and he was infinite in every respect. If he but wills he can create millions of Vivekanandas in the twinkling of the eye. Do you think I shall be allowed to rest, if I say I won't work? He wants this body and mind to be his instruments; he likes to work through them. What can I do but yield and obey?" This talk of Swamiji with brother Yogin opened our eyes. We came to understand, "True indeed is what brother Loren says. Infinite are his facets, infinite are the approaches. What do we know of him? What can we understand? Brother Vivekananda has understood him through his grace; so it is that he is making us understand him. Is it not said by him that this brother Vivekananda will make his ideas understandable to the world? Did he not say 'I brought him down to earth for this purpose?'" As I was revolving all these in my mind one day, the following words of the Master flashed upon me: "Look here, others are like dim lamps, some bright lamps, at the most one or two are like a twinkling star; but my Naren is the dazzling sun. Before him all grow dim...." Still one day I told him, "Brother, why bring in all these troubles? Will they (these works) not interfere with our meditation and prayer?" Do you know what he said with an indulgent smile? "What would you understand why I am introducing all these? You are a fool; as the Master, so the disciple. At the sight of '*Ka*', (the first consonant) you shed profuse tears like Prahlada.*

* When at school Prahlada, a son of the emperor of the demons, Hiranyakasipu, was introduced to the first consonant 'Ka', he was at once reminded of Krishna, the Lord of the universe and he started shedding profuse tears in ecstasy.

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You are all a gang of devotees, what will you understand of this? You are meant for crying like babes. And you think you would attain salvation through this (crying)? On the last day the Master will come to take you to Vaikuntha, do you think so? And there you will enjoy to your heart's content, is it? And those who are followers of *jñāna* here, who are educating people in the path of righteousness, who are serving the diseased and the distressed here will all go to hell; this is the precious idea, isn't it? Because all these are Maya! To go to bring succour to the people is to interfere with divine justice? All these are troubles, impediments in the path of *bhakti*! This is what you mean to say, isn't it? As if, my dear Leto, to walk the path of God is so easy as that. You call on God and He comes, a few sound vibrations and the Lord of the universe comes running, you keep a picture of God, imaginary or so-called real, throw a few flowers besmeared with sandal paste and worship Him and He becomes your slave! This is your religion, bah!" It was a stunning blow. The thoughts were so new and so terribly right. A *gurubhai* lisped just a few syllables in continuation of my thought and got a cutting snub. Continued the Swami, "Aha! What you call *bhakti* is a huge hoax, folly of the first magnitude! That has only one utility — making a weak man weaker. I don't care for that kind of *bhakti*. The *bhakti* that makes man so self-centred as to be busy with his personal salvation, which does not make his heart bleed for others — that *bhakti* I have no need of. To make man of a man I am ready to go to hell a hundred times, still I would not like to go to your heaven through the door of such *bhakti* as yours. I would not give a copper for such *bhakti*. If your Ramakrishna teaches such a doctrine I am not prepared to hear him, make a note of this. One day I foolishly asked for this kind of *bhakti* and he rebuked me and called me selfish and of little intellect. Am I going to be duped by your words? I would work as he has made me understand. He who is ready to cast away the very idea of personal salvation and would work for other's good, know it for certain, I am his bond slave". Saying this brother Vivekananda burst into tears and left the room. Then we felt very sorry. "Why did I go to tell all these to him? The Master has made him our leader. Our duty is to follow him. I will never again argue with him,"—I took this vow. Next day when I found him alone I told him, "Brother, I am a fool. Please don't take my words to heart." At that do you know what brother Loren told me? He said, "You wanted to know why I am introducing so many sources of worries and troubles into the lives of monks. Hear then. It is not for you and me but for the future generations of monks. You know very well what troubles we had to undergo — many of them quite unnecessarily. By establishing an organization of monks with service to humanity as a main plank, I make their life a little easy. They will get their bread by working for the good of others; and thus freed from the bother of finding food, they will be able to utilize their leisure in meditation and prayer and in cultivating good thoughts and sentiments as well as noble works. Through the Master's grace all these ideas will be realized, you will see it." Now I see his ideas actually realized — so many Math and Mission centres have been founded and a number of monks and Brahmacharins are carrying out brother Loren's ideas.' [From the conversation with a devotee at Balaram Babu's house in 1907.]

In 1897 Swamiji went on a tour of Northern India. He took Lātu Maharaj with him. They visited Almora, Ambala, Amritsar, Kashmir, Lahore, Dehra-Dun, Delhi, Alwar, Khetri and Jaipur. We have heard of various incidents of this period from a number of devotees. We cull them here, as far as possible, chronologically.

When the Swami was wandering in the Himalayas as an unknown monk, once he came to Almora. He was so weak with hunger

To shed tears in remembrance of the Lord is an achievement, according to the Vaishnava tradition. The Swami is pooh-poohing the idea in jest, rather half in jest; for the Swami wanted to introduce bones into the jelly-fish sentimentalism that strutted as religion in India.

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that he fell unconscious on a road. Then a Muslim fakir saved his life by feeding him with a *kaukri,* a cucumber-like fruit. When the Swami came to Almora after his first journey to the West he happened to meet the same fakir there. In the course of a talk one day Lātu Maharaj referred to this incident : 'You know, if anybody did the Swami just a small turn he would magnify it as a great service, would never forget it. At Almora when we were putting up at Badri Shah's house, I saw the Swami breaking up the conversation and running to the street and thrusting Rs. 2/- into the palm of a fakir. I asked him in surprise "Why did you give money to him?" He said, "Shall I not? This fakir once saved my life. When I lay unconscious with hunger on a street of this town it was he who fed me with a cucumber-like fruit and brought me back to consciousness. What do you think Lātu? Can I repay that debt by giving him a few coins? A turn in time is indeed invaluable".'

Lātu Maharaj must have accompanied Swamiji to Ambala and Amritsar, for he said he saw, the Saviers coming down from Simla to meet the Swami—a meeting which happened at Ambala. Again he said that the top of the Amritsar temple, like that of Viswanath at Benares, was covered with gold and that formerly people had wealth and they knew how to spend it well too.

Here are three incidents that took place in Kashmir. Swamiji hired a house-boat there. The owner lived with his whole family in one corner of the boat. These people had no other house. Lātu Maharaj got into the boat first. But the moment he saw a woman there he jumped out of it. Swamiji understood the situation and started persuading him to get in ; but Lātu Maharaj insisted that he must not share a boat with a woman. When at last the Swami said, 'I am here with you, what fear is there? Nothing will happen to you,' he agreed and got in. (Narrated by G. C. Ghosh).

The second incident : One day the Swami asked Lātu Maharaj to purchase cooked rice and meat for himself. Lātu Maharaj had by that time given up taking meat. Lest the Swami should press him to take meat he said, 'I will surely buy rice and meat for you but mind you, I will not take it myself'. At that the Swami said, 'Ah! You need not purchase then'. But Lātu Maharaj did not hear him. He went and purchased the two articles for the Swami.

The third incident : Once Swamiji had gone out to see an old Hindu temple ; returning he said in the course of his conversation that the temple would be about three thousand years old. At this Lātu Maharaj asked him how he knew it. The Swami said, 'It would not be possible for me to explain it to you. Had you had some education it would have been possible'. This jolly carp was met by a home thrust. Lātu Maharaj replied, 'I have understood it, eh! — the depth of your scholarship. It is so deep as not to be able to explain this phenomena to a confirmed fool like me!' It set all people roll in laughter.

While the Swamis were at Lahore, 'a class friend of Swami Vivekananda one day came to him and not knowing how to address him frankly asked him, "How should I address you now?" At this the Swami laughed and said, "Old fellow, have you run mad? Have I grown into a god or a demon? I am the same Naren and you are the same Mati." The distance vanished in a trice. He started talking familiarly and took us to his circus one night,' says Lātu Maharaj.

They spent about a fortnight at Dehra Dun, from where they (?) went to Khetri. Then they came to Delhi. Here he became the guest of a poor Bengali gentleman. 'One day a gentleman came to the Swami and asked him why he did not see any light though he prayed hard according to the injunctions of the scriptures. The Swami replied "You go on parrot-like reciting verses and hymns in Sanskrit, whose meaning you do not know. Give up praying in a language not known to you, use your mother tongue and feelingly call on Him." The gentleman followed his advice and got light.'

(To be continued)

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NIRVIKALPA SAMADHI: ITS NATURE AND ATTAINMENT

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

IMPELLED by the power of Māyā we have attained this state of finiteness. If we cannot manifest our divine nature now it is because a great power has created confusion in our understanding, and as a result we are behaving as we are. We have forgotten our real nature. Being royal descendents we are behaving like beggars.

When the power of Māyā is understood man realizes his own nature. That realization sometimes comes like a flash of lightning, revealing to one the truth, but just as a landscape is seen for a brief second in a flash of lightning and is again covered up by the darkness, so the truth may be revealed and again seemingly lost. Of course, it cannot be blotted out from our consciousness altogether. It remains in much the same way as the consciousness of the landscape remains after the flash is over. However, the state of security has been described as that state of consciousness when the revealing light is retained, fully and completely, with no flickering or wavering. To go back to our pristine glory out of which we have been drawn by the power of Māyā, to attain that state and to remain in it, is to attain the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi.

Now, how to reach that state? Before we discuss that, we should convince ourselves as to what we really want. If we do not want the Truth it would be useless for all the teachers in the world to try to compel us to attain it. One cannot get it without embracing it, and it requires a good deal of unfoldment to be able to say, sincerely, that we want nothing but that Nirvikalpa state. If there is even the subtlest desire one cannot attain to that state. If one wants to enjoy the beauty of God, to talk to God, and to develop the godly powers in oneself, even such desires will prove to be a hindrance to the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samādhi. One has to give up all desires. There are not many who can even bear the idea of it. Most of us would be frightened to death if that state were offered to us. We referred to the experience of the great Swami Vivekananda, when, as a boy, Sri Ramakrishna by a mere touch put his consciousness into that state. Narendra cried out. He did not want that state at that time.

It is difficult for us to get away from the subject-object consciousness. We understand the language of the subject — I am this and I want this to enjoy — that is what we understand. Perhaps the idea of going to a heaven will appeal to more people than the attainment of the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi. I remember that once Swami Turiyananda asked me a question abruptly when I went to see him. I paid my respects and sat down in front of him. 'Would you like to go to heaven?' he asked. I immediately answered, 'No'. He smiled and said, 'That is because you do not believe there is a heaven. But suppose I can show you that there is one. Then would you say that you would not want to go?' It is impossible for the mind that cherishes a bit of desire, even the desire to go to heaven, to appreciate that state of Samādhi, that state of infinite Truth, I call it. That is why Bhakti and other methods appeal to many of us.

Many people can understand dualism and qualified monism but find it very difficult to comprehend and appreciate absolute monism. If you are a follower of the path of monism you have to negate every function of the mind and body. There is no seeing, no hearing, no mind. What remains is the state of monistic realization. It is true that many cannot cherish it. It is true, but nowhere else is there any

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security except in that state of non-dualism. Analyse this statement: There is no security anywhere except in that state of non-dualism. Where there is duality there remains a competitor. If two exist there can be agitations of all sorts. If you and God exist you may be unhappy one day and happy another. Where is there any security in that? Where is the guarantee that happiness will continue? Enjoyment on the plane of duality cannot last. Dualistic bliss cannot be the final state. That state is beyond the conception of duality. In the Upaniṣads it is said that where there is duality there is fear and where there is fear there is misery. On the plane of duality there is no escape from suffering. Show me a Bhakta, a believer in the dualistic philosophy, who did not suffer immense pain and sorrow. The suffering of the Bhaktas was as colossal as their enjoyment. Lovers of God, great Bhaktas, suffer terribly. The only rest, the only lasting peace, is on the plane of the formless, where there is no existence of the subject and the object, no 'I' and 'my' consciousness. That is described as the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi. The appreciation for that state grows with discrimination. When the soul goes through experiences, with discrimination, it comes to the conclusion that in the realm of duality there is no lasting peace. There is still Māyā and in duality Māyā rules supreme. Gradually the yearning is felt to transcend all dualistic perception.

In the life of Sri Ramakrishna, a rare case, we also find that he at first wanted to see God, to talk to God, to love God as his own Mother. You, who have read his life, know how he struggled and suffered to reach that state of realization. You know how he remained in the ecstasy of that realization for a long time, not caring for anything else. Later on, when he underwent practices to experience the Formless state, beyond duality, you know how difficult it was for him to blot out the image of the blissful Mother. He experienced that Samādhi under the tutelage of his great teacher, Tota-puri. Later for six months he remained constantly in it. His body was almost on the verge of deterioration; all functions of his body and mind were negated. A sadhu and his nephew had to strike him occasionally to bring him to body consciousness, enough to force a little sustenance into him. When he returned from that 'voyage into the unknown' he said that the Mother had told him that he was not to remain in that state. She told him: 'I am going to put you on the last step of the "stairway". You may have a full view of the roof, but you are not to stay on the roof. You can see the roof and you can also see all the steps of the "stairway", in order to help others to reach the roof.' Of course, his case is unique. Few, if any, may be compared with him. Attaining to that state of non-duality he again came back for the benefit of others. He could not have come back for his own benefit. He would have been absorbed into that Reality, without being able to retain a subject-object consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna's mind was of such a nature that its tendency was to go towards the Nirvikalpa state of consciousness. He had to coax his mind to come down. He would implant a desire in it in order to bring it back: a simple desire, say, for a glass of water, that would bring his mind down to the subject-object consciousness.

It is not possible to have the consciousness of a 'doer' in the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi. If you cherish even a desire to do good to humanity, or any other desire you can think of, it will be but a chain to bind you down to this Māyā. It is an excuse to remain in the field of phenomena. In the last analysis, it is nothing but a bondage. If one can say that he wants the Truth, even if getting it means the annihilation of the whole of phenomena, that is a bold declaration and he can appreciate the Nirvikalpa state. Many have questioned as to whether it is possible for a person attaining that Nirvikalpa Samādhi to move and act again in this world. So, I say it is possible for a rare few. However, if you have the hope of coming back after attaining that state, to 'do good to others', and so on, I ask you, 'What do you want, the Nirvikalpa

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state or the world?' It might please the 'Mother' to put you in the world again but if you cherish the hope of her sending you back you will never attain to the Nirvikalpa state. One must have absolute desirelessness. Then it makes no difference whether one goes to heaven or to hell. We have to be able to look at the sun without protective glasses. Total absorption into that Nirvikalpa Samādhi, into that Truth, is the reality. Everything else is Māyā.

By negating dualism only, one realizes the Nirvikalpa state. On the lower plane there is the subject-object consciousness. What guarantee is there that the mind that loves God today will not love the devil tomorrow? This mind, so long as it remains, is like the appendix. (Some people have it removed just to eliminate the possibility of having appendicitis!) The mind is fickle by nature. Constancy is not its nature.

When you meditate you try to 'drown' the mind. Only when the mind is calmed and the senses are controlled can you meditate. The 'I' which associates itself with the mind vanishes, is 'drowned,' when the subject-object consciousness is gone and you realize your identity with Brahman. Thus, the 'darkness created by Nescience' (Māyā) is destroyed.

To kill desires, Śankaracharya prescribes, a few steps which are the disciplines of Yoga. I emphasize the control of speech and the love of solitude. The result of 'control of speech' is very far reaching. We do not realize how much disturbance speech creates on the lake of our minds. Start to control your speech. Practise observing silence for some time. You may start in a mechanical way at first, with gesticulations, pencil and pad, but later on you will have no need for them. You will begin to control desires. You will think, what do I care if So-and-so does not understand me? You will find out that the God's creation will go on without your saying this or that. You will begin to detect many things that were not visible in that whirlpool of talking. Swami Premananda used to tell us: 'You talkative fools, you talk nothing but nonsense. Let not your tongues talk; let your characters speak!' If you can quiet that tongue your character *will* speak. Talk just when necessary. Do not open your 'chatter-box' in season and out. If we can control the tongue, the rest becomes easy.

'Non-receiving of gifts': Be uncompromising. Say, 'I do not want any gifts. I want to stand on my own feet. I do not stretch my hands before anyone. If I have desires I have to pray to Gód. If I do not care for protection I let it go.' If one can make up his mind to it, he can attain that state of freedom. Dishonour and death are the two great items. Say, 'I am ready for both. Come on, I do not care.' One who has that mentality is fit for freedom, is free.

It is 'entertaining of hope' that weakens. The priests in the temple of a certain Maharaja were so great in their renunciation that the ruler had no control over them. They were gaining many followers and the Maharaja was angry. What could be done? Let me sow a seed of hope, thought the Maharaja. He went to the priests and said, 'I see that you all need new clothes. I think that your food should be improved, more variety, and so on. I shall see to these things at once'. A little seed! Gradually, the priests began to gather round the Maharaja, anxious to please him. The seed was sprouting! We must be able to say, 'I have no hope'.

'Freedom from activity': Why shall I act? Action is an acknowledgement that you do not have something. The more imperfect a person the more he will act. Why brag about your activity? Isn't it true that the person farthest away tries to run the fastest? Can you be the 'prince of "lazies"', who finds it too much to breathe or to open his eyes? We have extolled our shortcomings as virtues.

'Living in a retired place': It is not possible to culture inner spirituality unless one lives in retirement for some time. Be alone, even

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in a small corner of your room, yourself and God. When you are absolutely quiet and alone you will feel the presence of God.

I emphasize the first and the last steps — control of speech and retirement into solitude.

If we could cut off the strings of the fear of death and dishonour for five minutes, we would know what it is to be free.

THE GRANDEST DISCOVERY OF THE UPANIṢADS

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

FROM very early times the main concern of philosophy has been the quest after Ultimate Reality. This quest is the outcome of man's intense desire to ascertain what is permanent and unchanging behind and beneath the passing shows of the external world and the ever-changing states of the internal self. It takes two forms, objective and subjective. The former consists in making a thoroughgoing analysis of the phenomena of nature, while the latter proceeds by studying the internal states through which an individual passes in the course of a single day. Since the Upaniṣadic view seems to be that reality, external or internal, is thickly laid over with incrustations, it is the method of analysis and elimination that is found most suitable. Under favourable conditions provided by nature, it is possible to discover what remains as the hard, inner core, when all else that is in the nature of superimposition has been removed one by one. In western logic this method is known as 'Natural Experiment'.

Bernard Bosanquet has said in one of his Gifford Lectures that if we carry out a systematic and dispassionate analysis of the experiences of a normal human being running through a single day, we will be able to establish the philosophical creed known as Absolute Idealism which believes in the ultimacy of spirit. But by and large western thinkers do not bestow much thought on this line of approach. Their studies are confined to the waking experience of man and the objective world which is presented to it. If they study the phenomena of dreams at all, they do so purely from the psychological and not from the metaphysical point of view. Needless to say that they give little or no thought to the phenomenon of dreamless sleep. As for mystical experiences, they are dismissed as apocryphal. Poets may indulge in them but philosophers can have no concern with them.

In refreshing contrast to this one-sided view, we find Indian thinkers bestowing equal attention on both lines of approach to reality. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and the Sāṅkhya systems of thought have made systematic attempts to arrive at Ultimate Reality by the analysis of the external world. In the view of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika the whole world is reducible to matter which, in its turn, lends itself to further analysis. It is found that the tiniest particle of matter is the atom (*aṇu*). The analysis does not stop here. It proceeds to break up the atom into two dyads (*dwyaṇuka*) and again each dyad into three ultimate particles known as *paramāṇu*. The objects of the world take shape by the combination of these ultimate particles of which, however, there are many kinds.

Without entering into a detailed examination of the *paramāṇu-vāda*, we may only note that the atoms, being insentient, cannot come together of their own accord. It is necessary, therefore, to recognize another entity endowed with sentience. This is what the Sāṅkhya calls Puruṣa. It also shows that since there can be no variety or difference in the so-called ultimate particles, we may stop with matter (Prakṛti) and not proceed further with the analysis. Prakṛti and Puruṣa are the two ultimate entities to which, according to the Sāṅkhya, the whole world is reducible.

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Prakṛti is composed of three *guṇas, sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. These are not its attributes but its very constituents. The mere presence of Puruṣa is enough to disturb the equilibrium of the three *guṇas* and set Prakṛti in motion. This is called evolution or *sarga*. It is needless to go into the details of the process of evolution.

The Vedantic criticism is that since Prakṛti cannot move except in the presence of Puruṣa, it must be treated as insentient (*jaḍa*)). It can neither move of its own accord nor reveal itself. It exists but does not know that it exists. It has being (*sat*) and no knowing (*chit*). It follows that Prakṛti does not have the same ontological status as Puruṣa. It must be held to be subordinate to the latter. And again, Puruṣa, being pure sentience, can admit of no plurality. There is no warrant to believe in a multiplicity of Puruṣas. If the unessential elements in them are eliminated, only pure sentience will remain which obviously cannot be more than one.

Thus we arrive at the conception of spirit which has matter for its adjunct. This is the Īśvara of the Vedanta. The Upaniṣad[1] speaks of 'spirit hidden in the *guṇas*'. Further analysis of Īśvara leads to the conception of Saguṇa Brahman which is a complex of spirit and matter. The latter is shown to be a superimposition on Pure Spirit owing to foundational ignorance. When this ignorance is dispelled by the advent of right knowledge, matter automatically disappears and Brahman emerges as the sole reality. It is strictly 'the one without a second'. All this is beautifully set forth in Uddālaka's instruction to his son Śvetaketu. This section of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is a good example of reaching the highest reality through the objective method. He shows in the first instance that the whole world is reducible to matter and mind. Then he points out that the latter is only a transformation of the former in one of its varieties known as *anna* (अन्न) the other two being water and fire. Through permutation and combination (*trivṛt karaṇa*) these three become gross elements. In their subtle form they are mere projections of Brahman who is spoken of as *sat*. It must also be a sentient entity (*chit*) since it is said to have thought (*aikṣat*) before projecting itself. As we have already shown, sentience is always homogeneous. There being no variety or difference in it, there can be no discord or tension. It must therefore be full of bliss (*ānanda*). Putting the three notions together we get the conception of Brahman as Saccidānanda. That the finite self (*jīva*) is identical with Brahman is first boldly declared by means of the *mahāvākya* 'Tat Tvam Asi' and then demonstrated by means of a number of analogies such as rivers losing their individuality when they discharge their waters into the sea, and honey collected by bees from different sources becoming one and homogeneous when once it is put into the pool. Thus by adopting the objective method of study Uddālaka establishes the supremacy of Brahman as the sole reality.

The Upaniṣadic thinkers proceed to reinforce this conclusion by analysing the states through which an individual passes in the course of a day. This is not the same as the analysis of the experiences of man such as ethical, aesthetic, religious and mystical.[2] These experiences relate only to the waking state. They therefore admit of being studied in an objective manner. But our concern just now is with the states of man other than his waking condition. These are the dream and dreamless-sleep states. A few gifted souls who have successfully gone through the discipline of the eight-fold yoga have a fourth state known as Turiya. This also will have to be studied with a view to discover the inmost reality of man. Prajapati's instruction to Indra,[3] Yājñavalkya's instruction to Emperor Janaka[4] and Ajātaśatru's instruction to Balāki[5] are

[1] देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् । *Svet. Up.* I. 3.

[2] This is a different subject for study. If it is carried out in full it will lend additional support to the main conclusion of the Upanisads.

[3] *Chandogya* VIII. vii to xi.

[4] *Br. Up.* IV. iii.

[5] *Br. Up.* II. i. 15-19.

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based on the analysis of the three states. The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* makes mention of all the four states but the analysis, though very suggestive and of deep import, is not as full as could be desired. Gauḍapāda has elaborated these suggestions in his work known as *Māṇḍūkya Kārika*. The identification of the three states with the three letters, a, u and m which constitute the mystic syllable 'Aum' and the further identification of the fourth syllable known as '*amātra*' with the fourth *pāda* called Turiya have contributed to the great esteem in which this Upaniṣad is held. The *Muktikopaniṣad*[6] maintains that the proper study of this one Upaniṣad is by itself sufficient to carry *a man to his highest* goal. In some other Upaniṣads[7] also there are stray references to the analysis of the three states.

In the waking state the mind as well as the organs of sense are fully active and through the latter the former gets into touch with the objects of the external world. This impact gives rise to sensation which are vague and indeterminate. They are worked up into judgments by the mind which interprets them in terms of categories like *jāti, guṇa, karma* and so forth. These judgments are next referred to the intellect (*buddhi*) which decides on the course of action that is found necessary. The circuit then becomes complete. The bulk of our knowledge arises in this way and it is known as *pratyakṣa jñāna*.

In sleep our sense-organs are quiescent. They cease to function and consequently the mind loses touch with the external world. But all the same, we have perceptions. As the Upaniṣad[8] puts it: 'There are no chariots, nor animals to be yoked to them, nor roads there, but the mind creates the chariots, animals and roads.' This statement is typical of all dream experiences. All that we see, hear, taste, smell and touch in the waking state is reproduced in sleep. But dream perceptions do not look like old memories recalled for the moment. They are clear, vivid and have the same feeling of 'presentness' as the waking perceptions. The mind is active in that state and making use of the impressions of the waking state, it constructs curious and fanciful judgments. The Upaniṣad[9] speaks of the mind as the agent of dream perceptions. 'When he sleeps he takes away a little of the impressions of this all-embracing world, viz., the waking state,' and constructs the perceptions that we see in dreams.

These are so many states of the mind called *Vṛttis*. Since they are insentient and cannot reveal themselves, we must suppose that they are rendered luminous by some inner light. In the waking state we have the light of the sun and moon and we may think that the states of mind are revealed by their light, but in sleep they are absent. Light therefore must come from some other source. In his instruction to Emperor Janaka, Yājñavalkya points out that when the sun, moon, fire and the human voice have all failed, it is the light of the innerself that serves our purpose. This light is unfailing. Even in the waking state it is this inner light that renders the *vṛttis* luminous and not the light of the sun or moon. That in the state of dream, though the sun and the moon are absent, we still have perceptions proves conclusively that the light which renders them luminous comes from the self.[10] In this state (dream) the man himself becomes the light (*Br. Up.* IV. iii. 10).

The next state is dreamless sleep. This is defined as the state wherein the sleeper has no desires and consequently perceives nothing. This definition seems to anticipate the modern Freudian theory that dreams are wish-fulfilling in nature. Unfulfilled desires, accord-

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[6] माण्डूक्यमेवालं मुमुक्षूणां विमुक्तये ।
Muktikopanisad, 26.

[7] *Katha*, IV. 4; *Prashna*, IV; VI. 8; *Kaivalya*, 13; *Kausitaki*, III. 3.

[8] *Br. Up.*, IV. iii. 10.

[9] *Br. Up.*, IV. iii. 10.

[10] Sri Sankara writes:
अपिच जागरिते विषयेन्द्रिय संयोगात् आदित्यादि व्यतिरेकाच्च आत्मनः स्वयं ज्योतिष्ट्वं दुर्विवेचनमिति तद्विवेचनाय स्वप्न उपन्यस्तः
Vol. III. p. 566. (Memorial Edition, Sri Vani Vilas Press).

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ing to Freud, find satisfaction in dream constructions. But if there are no desires at all there can be no dreams either. Since the mind is the seat of desire, the absence of the latter implies the quiescence of the former. In dreamless sleep, therefore, even the mind does not function. In the absence of perceptions, this state may look like a blank, a mere void and total annihilation. That is how it strikes Indra and he expresses his dissatisfaction to Prajapati.[11]

But it is wrong to think that when there are no particular perceptions, the inner light that illumines them also gets extinguished. In the waking and dream states there are the *vṛttis* and the inner light serves to illumine them. In the state of dreamless sleep, since even the mind ceases to function, there is nothing to illumine and the inner light shows that it is a void or blank. The author of *Vedanta Pancadaśī* gives the example of the light which continues to burn on the stage even after the dancer and the spectators have retired. The light then shows that there is nothing in that place. Even this is a judgment and it presupposes a light which illumines the void. The inner light is sentience all-compact and it can never suffer extinction.[12]

We recall that experience the next morning and exclaim 'I slept well, I did not know anything'. We recall only those experiences which we have actually perceived previously. Recall also presupposes the presence of an entity common to both past and present. Some entity which was the witness of the void of the previous state of dreamless sleep must be present in the waking state also. In the absence of such a connecting link we can never remember the past experience of happy, dreamless sleep. The sentient element which lights up the perceptions of the waking and sleep states is also the entity which shows that there is nothing to be perceived in the state of dreamless sleep and which enables one to recall that experience the next morning. It follows that the sentient element is the constant factor involved in all the three states. It is called the witness consciousness (*sākṣi jñāna*). The states may come and go, but this goes on for ever. It is the light of all our seeing and hearing, it is the light which illumines all our dream-perceptions and finally, it is the light which burns by itself even when there is nothing to illumine.

Even if we confine our attention to the experiences of the waking state alone we reach the same conclusion. It is well-known that in the waking state we have a succession of *vṛttis*. It is a series. One state is different from another. And yet we have knowledge of these different states as constituting a series. In a cinema show a number of pictures is projected on the canvas in quick succession. Supposing there is no one to witness the whole show, can the snaps be aware of themselves as constituting a series? No. In the same way, there are our mental states, each differing from the others and each making place for another. If we have knowledge of the series as a whole and as meaning something, it presupposes a witness consciousness. Knowledge of change and difference is possible only if there is a knowing entity which is changeless and always identical with itself. A *sākṣin* is therefore implicit in our knowledge of change and difference. 'A series', as T. H. Green has well said, 'cannot be aware of itself as a series.' If, as the Buddhists maintain, there is nothing constant either in the external or in the internal world and everything is reduced to a series, we cannot explain how any knowledge can arise at all. The knowledge of change presupposes something unchanging; knowledge of difference presupposes something that remains identical with itself. Change and difference may pertain to the object of knowledge but not to the knowing subject.[13]

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[11] *Ch. Up.*, VIII. xi. 1. विनाशमेव अ ीतो भवति

[12] *Br. Up.*, IV. iii. 30.

नहि विज्ञातुः विज्ञातेः विपरिलोपोविद्यते अविनाशित्वात् ।

[13] In his *Atma Vidya Vilasa*, Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra writes :

भेदोऽपि साक्ष्यगत एव न साक्षिणीमे

भेदस्य साक्षिणि कथं प्रभवेत्स भेदः

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Freed from its adventitious association with the sense-organs, mind and intellect, the Self is then said to rest in itself and be united with the Real.[14] It emerges from its limitations and rises to its full stature. 'The serene light, rising out of the body, and having reached the highest light, appears in its own form.'[15] The nature of this transcendence has been elucidated by Śri Śankara by the examples of stars beginning to shine at night when the sun is no longer there to overpower them, a white crystal appearing in its real colour when the red flower is removed from its proximity. In its true state the self is known as the Atman.

The fourth state is known as Turiya. It is a shortened form of Caturiya. Since it passes beyond the subject-object relation, it does not admit of a positive description. Hence it is named the fourth state. In this state consciousness of the Absolute is transformed into Absolute Consciousness (*akhaṇḍa caitanya*). There is no perceiver and perceived, no knower and known. It is impartite consciousness which nullifies all distinctions including that between subject and object.[16] In one of his minor poems known as *Swarūpānusandhānāṣṭakaṁ* (5) Śri Śankara gives some account of the Yogin's experience in this fourth state: 'The Poorna (Brahman) which is beyond the three states, which is non-dual and one, makes itself manifest to the mind of the yogin who is in deep samadhi. He realizes that it is identical with his inmost Self.'[17]

The Poorna is realized at this stage to be identical with the inmost Self of the Yogin. The two lines of approach to reality converge here. It is like two astronomers observing a planet or star from two different parts of the world and ultimately discovering that both of them have been studying the same heavenly body. This equation '*Ātma ca Brahma*' is the grandest contribution which the Upaniṣads have made to philosophic thought. It will stand unchallenged for all time.

[14] *Ch. Up.*, VI. viii. 1.
[15] *Ch. Up.*, VIII. xii. 3.

[16] Compare *Haristuti*: 4.
ज्ञातृ ज्ञान ज्ञेय विहीनोऽपि सदा ज्ञः

[17] निषेधेकृते नेति नेतीति वाक्यैः
समाधिस्थितानां यदाभाति पूर्णम् ।
अवस्थात्रयातीतमद्वैतमेकं
परं ब्रह्मनित्यं तदेवाहमस्मि ॥

THE STORY OF THE VIRTUOUS BUTCHER

(*Continued from the April issue*)

T. R. RAJAGOPALA AIYAR

V

A Vision and the Life Story of the Butcher

'This is comforting not only to you but you are now in a position to understand and appreciate the secret of my life and why I still continue the vocation of a butcher. Be pleased to enter the sanctum sanctorum of my house and to behold with your naked eyes the visible Gods whom I worship.' So saying his strange host led the Brahmin to an outhouse well-furnished, neat and comfortable, which was festooned and decorated like a temple. Entrance into Mithila and its very air and surroundings had touched the Brahmin who had come from afar, seeking after the truth and the knowledge which saves, and put him on the *quivive*. But lo, instead of the resplendant gods whom he expected in bodily presence, he found but the two aged parents of the butcher.

'Behold the gods whom I worship. Like Rama who worshipped Daśaratha and Kausalya, I know none other higher than my

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parents. Bow unto them and receive their blessings.' Strangely disturbed in his thoughts and values of life, the Brahmin did so, and long and earnestly he conversed with his extraordinary host and his parents and witnessed with what religious awe and tenderness the butcher attended upon and served his parents.

'I now see light,' exclaimed the Brahmin voluntarily. 'I sought truth, but in a wrong way. Since, however, truth saves, it sent me on to the Brāhmani. She in her turn sent me on to you. And I am glad and proud that instead of shutting my eyes and ears to the call of truth, in the pride and hardness of my heart, I obeyed and came hither. You have shaken me to the very core, but oh, blessed Rishi, for such I deem you — much have you suggested and made me think. You have taught me by your way of life like the very god, Dakshinamurthy, more than all the sages and scriptures can. Be pleased to tell me the story of your life.' To this the butcher replied : 'I was about to give the finishing touch to the purpose for which you were forwarded here, by the narration of my life-story. My last life was that of a Brahmin. I formed an intimacy with a king who taught me archery. I was so proud of my acquisition of this art that I became vain, and practised and displayed it on all occasions. Gradually my nature itself underwent a transformation from the Sattvic one of a Brahmin to the Rajasic one of a Kshatriya. I went to the forest one day and aimed an arrow, like King Daśaratha, at what in the distance looked like an animal. But instead came the cry of a human being and I found that I had pierced a sage. Fortunately the blow was not mortal. I extracted the arrow, applied healing herbs and the sage recovered. He cursed me, however, saying "your nature has changed into that of a hunter and a butcher. Run out the course you have begun by being born a butcher in your next life". My revulsion and repentance were so intense and sincere that I fell at the feet of the sage and begged for a reprieve from his curse. "I cannot do it and I will not do it," said the inexorable sage. "You must taste the fruit of your own action, however bitter. But since your repentance is deep, I grant you this boon : You will be a Jātismara i.e. you will carry the knowledge of this life in your next. Manu, the great Law-giver has stated that such knowledge comes only to those who have performed their duties aright, whose minds thereby are purified ; who can look before and after, and hence can mould their lives." So I was born with this knowledge, with this secret of the law of Karma, of cause and effect. This is my last life.'

'Pray teach me and finish what you have so well begun. I fall at thy feet, take refuge in thee as a Guru, and in word and in spirit ask thee to impart to me the highest knowledge of God or the Self, whichever it is, as enjoined by the Śāstras,' said the Brahmin.

'You are right and I waited but for this declaration of thine and this approach to me as a Guru by thee as a Śiṣya. The whole world is bound by the three Gunas or qualities of Sattva or light, Rajas or activity, and Tamas or darkness and ignorance. All beings perform actions which come under one or more of these qualities and take the life of and are born according to the tenor of their actions. There are four castes among men — the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya and the Sudra. The bounds of these four, no doubt, are settled and defined by past actions and determine the present. But the spirit which is inside every being, laughs at and scorns such barriers. I am in reality a Brahmin by my spiritual knowledge and you did well in coming to me, bowing to me and praying for knowledge,' said the butcher tenderly raising up the Brahmin and embracing him.

'Though I anticipate in humility what you will say, oh, say it with thy lips,' prayed the Brahmin.

'You have committed a dereliction of duty in abandoning your aged and blind parents, in your mistaken search for a higher life. Go back and serve them, even as I serve my parents, as the Brāhmani serves her husband. Each man is born into his caste and his calling

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by his past acts. He cannot jump out of them just as he cannot jump out of himself. One's own duties not only suffice but should be sacred to every man, however lowly or mean they may be. It is spiritual transgression and death to abandon one's *swadharma,* one's own duties, and to resort to another, however apparently superior and attractive. God lies only in one's duties,' said the butcher solemnly.

'But is not Karma or duty never-ending? Does it not bind man permanently in a chain of cause and effect?' asked the Brahmin.

'Yes,' answered the butcher, 'there is no loop-hole for the ignorant, for those who have not escaped from their senses, their desires, their Ego. Five senses and the mind are the six horses, the body the chariot, and the Jīva the traveller within. If man entrusts the driving to his higher Self, God Narayana, and curbs his senses, he thereby reaches his goal, — Vishnu Padam or the highest heaven, release and immortality. Just as poisons if purified are efficacious in the highest degree as panaceas, Karma or action can be deprived of its virus, if dissociated from Kāma or desire, the hankering after results. The link in the chain which binds the Ego to the eternal wheel of Samsara, cause and effect, birth and death, is snapped. The act becomes motiveless, the Karma becomes Akarma or non-action, and scriptures proclaim that the highest duty is Nishkāma Karma, duty done for duty's sake, without motive, in a spirit of self-sacrifice, for Loka Aradhana, the maintenance and uplift of the Universe. For God is everywhere and He rests in all things and all things rest in Him. The best worship of Him, the easiest way to attain Him or salvation is to dedicate all one's acts to Him. I have taught you that there is no high and low in Karma, that one's own duties are the best and it is the only means of salvation if rightly performed. Go back, serve your parents, perform the duties of a Grihasta or a householder. Station in life as of a Brahmachari or a student, a Grihasta or a householder, a Sannyasi or a recluse, matter not; they are mere names. It is the spirit that matters and knowledge comes in all states, if one's duties are well performed.'

And the Brahmin went back home as he was bid, served his parents devoutly, and performed his duties so well, that he got illumination ere long. And he handed down the tradition and secret of this Brahma Vidya to a long line of successors starting with the Pativrata Brāhmani as the great first teacher and the Dharmavyadha as the second, and with himself as third.

(Concluded)

A Correction

In the first instalment of this article which was published in the April 1965 issue the following correction is desired: On page 597, column II, line 2 from below, please *read* "Dwapara" *instead of* "Krita".

PANCADASĪ (*Continued from Page* 98)

(ether); *asatvaṁ,* non-existence; *té,* your; *buddhiṁ,* intelligence; *kathaṁ,* how; *ārohati,* enters; *iti-cet,* if we ask like this.

41. Well, let the four elements, beginning with *prithivī* (earth)[1] whose end is the atom (*paramāṇu*), being subject to decay, be not existing (before creation). But, we (the Naiyāyikas) ask 'how can your intelligence comprehend the non-existence of ether (*ākāśa*)?'[2]

[1] Earth, water, fire and air are the four elements referred to here.

[2] According to the Nyaya system *akasa* is of one form eternal and all-pervading, while the other four elements have two forms (the effectual and the atomic). Though the other four elements in their atomic (*paramanu*) form are eternal, in their effect-form they are ephemeral. शब्दगुणवाचकमाकाशम् । तच्चैकं विभु नित्यं च । *Tarkasangraha.*

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INDIA AND HER REGENERATION

O. R. KRISHNASWAMI

Indian Cultural Heritage

India is a country with a great cultural heritage. Indian civilization is perhaps the oldest civilization with an uninterrupted history. Most of her contemporaries have ceased to exist, but she has not only survived but maintained and developed a continuous culture. 'She stands', says Swami Vivekananda, 'firmer than rock in the world with its undying vigour, indestructible life.'[1] 'India is the blessed *puṇya bhūmi* (holy land), the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of spirituality.'[2]

India is a land of religion, philosophy and ethics, a land of sweetness, gentleness and love. From time immemorial India has been the mine of noble ideas to human society. Giving birth to high ideas herself she has freely distributed them to the whole world, and thus silently revolutionized the thought of the world. Romain Rolland wrote, 'If there is one place on the face of the earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home . . . it is India'.

There are countries which are civilized but without culture. But India has both civilization and culture. In India, culture 'is almost as extensive as civilization itself'.[3] While civilization is the organization of life which makes civil society possible, culture is the resultant of such organization. Culture expresses itself through language, art, philosophy, religion, social habits, customs etc. Not one of them is separately culture, but collectively they constitute the expression of life which we describe as culture. Culture refers to the human quality. While the difference in quality between the masses and the classes is very great in many countries, in India there is no such difference. By and large, the human quality in India is high.

This remarkable phenomenon can be explained in terms of the unity and continuity of Indian culture. On account of successive inroads of fighting races, India came into contact with different cultures. It freely drew from them and assimilated them and enriched itself. In spite of this derivation from many sources, we find a remarkable unity of spirit informing Indian culture. This unity in diversity is one of the most remarkable features of Indian culture. A sense of Indian-ness has imposed unity. Geography has been largely responsible for the sense of Indian-ness, for rarely has a country been so clearly marked out to be a unit. The very length of her history has also helped to create a common mentality. The tendency has been further strengthened by the unity of economic organization throughout the land. Besides unity, there has been continuity throughout the ages. Max Muller, the famous scholar and orientalist, emphasizes this: 'There is in fact, an unbroken continuity between the most modern and the most ancient phases of Hindu thought, extending over more than three thousand years.'[4]

The spirit of toleration has made possible the unity and continuity of her culture. Even the darkest clouds have a silver lining. The invasions of India by various foreign races have also had a redeeming feature. That is, an attitude of toleration was fostered. This spirit of toleration and accommodation combined with the capacity of readjustment have been

[1] *Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems*, compiled by Swami Nirvedananda, 1963, p. 2.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
[3] Humayun Kabir, *The Indian Heritage*, 1955, p. 45.
[4] Quoted in *The Discovery of India* by Jawaharlal Nehru, 1956, p. 77.

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responsible for the remarkable unity and continuity of Indian culture.

India's Life Centre

Each nation has its own individuality and vitality. Political power may be the vitality of one nation, artistic life in another and so on. In India, the foundation, the backbone, the life-centre, is religion. To quote Swamiji: 'In India, religious life forms the centre, the key-note of the whole music of national life.'[5]

India has made this choice ages ago, and her vitality has concentrated in religion. We cannot change it or replace it by politics or something else. We can work only under the law of least resistance, and the religious line is the line of least resistance in India. In the words of Swamiji, 'this is the line of growth, and this is the line of well-being in India'.[6]

If any nation attempts to throw off its national vitality, that nation dies. Therefore it religion which is the life of India goes, she will die. Fortunately her religion did not go, but has been preserved through the ages. So India stands deathless.

India's Mission

Each race has a peculiar mission to fulfil. Political greatness or military power was never the mission of our race. But our mission is to preserve, to accumulate all our spiritual energy to fulfil our glorious destiny, viz., 'the regeneration of man the brute into man the God'.[7]

Degeneration

Such a divine and glorious country 'narrowed herself, went into her shell as the oyster does' and failed to move and thus degenerated six or seven hundred years back. The process was a slow one and lasted several centuries, beginning in the north and finally reaching the south.

As Jawaharlal Nehru writes in his book entitled 'The Discovery of India', 'the glow of the morning had long faded away, high noon was past'.[8] The urge to life and endeavour became less, the creative spirit faded away and gave place to the blind imitative, rational spirit of enquiry, so evident in earlier times was replaced by irrationalism and a blind idolatry of the past. Indian life became a sluggish stream moving slowly through the accumulations of dead centuries. A kind of coma seized it. In this condition of mental inertia, India deteriorated and remained rigid and immobile while other parts of the world marched ahead.[9]

Causes for Her Degeneration

What are the causes for India's degeneration? Swamiji observes: 'The one great cause of the downfall and the degeneration of India was the building of a wall of custom whose foundation was hatred of others, round the nation.'[10]

According to moral law, none can hate others without degenerating oneself. India's race by developing hatred towards others has become a victim to this moral law.

Religious perversion has been another cause of her ruin. The leaders had forgotten the spirit of religion and concentrated solely on outward forms of religion. This led to the growth of ritual and the development of elaborate forms of worship. Worship became a profession or means of livelihood for a particular class. Religion thus lost its true spirit and degenerated. People have been discussing for years such petty questions as whether to take food with the right hand or the left. If such a country does not go to ruin what else will? asks Swamiji. Religious perversion has also manifested in the ugly forms of exclusiveness and touch-me-notism. Swamiji points out: 'India's doom was sealed the very day it

[5] *Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems*, p. 7.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[8] *The Discovery of India*, p. 217.
[9] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 1956, p. 41.
[10] *Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems*, Advaita Ashrama, 1963, p. 22.

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invented the word Mleccha and stopped from communion with others.'[11]

Thirdly, in their struggle for mutual supremacy, the priests and kings *neglected the masses*. They were allowed to go without education and adequate means of livelihood. They have been sinking and sinking and have come to the last stage to which a human being can come. This is a great national sin and one of the causes for India's downfall.

Fourthly, our degeneration is due to our *neglect of women*. The women who were held in high esteem in olden days have been neglected during recent centuries. Binding them by hard rules, the men have turned the women into mere manufacturing machines. Unless we raise the women who are the living embodiment of the Divine Mother, there will be no salvation for India.

Fifthly, *casteism* has been a cause for India's degeneration. Casteism was an outcome of division of labour. In origin it was a device for enabling different individuals to live together in harmony. Originally caste was based on function and not on heredity. Individuals as well as families could pass from caste to caste by changing their occupations. In due course, casteism became rigid, lost its flexibility and became a cause for India's degeneration. It disrupted her unity and divided the people into exclusive compartments of varying prestige and social status. As said by Nehru, 'it developed into a prison for social order, for the mind of man'.[12] The mind has lost all its strength, and its power of thought and just tries to go round and round the smallest curve like the bull of the native oil press.

Blind imitation of western ways of life was another cause for India's decadence. With the advent of British Rule and the introduction of English system of education in India, many Indians became westernised. They, after drinking the cup of western wisdom, have begun to hate everything that is Indian. They ridicule Indian philosophy, religion etc., and blindly imitate the western way of life. Such imitation is not civilization. As Swamiji said, 'It never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation'.[13]

Further, *lack of faith* in ourselves also contributed to our downfall. Why is it that we have been ruled for the last one thousand years by foreigners? Because they had faith in themselves and we had not. Strength is life; weakness is death.

Our *laziness, selfishness* and *jealousy, lack of self-help* and *business integrity* have also been responsible for our downfall.

Finally, we lack organizing capacity. Organization is a powerful armour. It means coordination of wills. India lacks this. So she is weak.

The way to her Regeneration

The country has fallen, no doubt, but will surely rise again. What is the way for her regeneration?

First of all we have to awaken the masses. Chester Bowles in his book entitled, '*The Makings of a Just Society*' asserts: 'Without the awakening of enthusiasm and co-operation of the masses, often buried under centuries of hopeless repression, development is impossible.'[14] To awaken the masses is a difficult job. We must have a band of dedicated men who are ready to sacrifice their everything for the country, sincere to the backbone. They must devote heart and soul to raise the masses of India. They must awake them, unite them, and inspire them with confidence. Swamiji observes: 'A hundred thousand men and women fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for poor, and the fallen and the down-trodden'[15] should go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation.

Secondly, we have to make *religion dynamic*. It must be brought free to the door of

[11] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V, p. 52.
[12] *Discovery of India*, p. 76.
[13] *Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems*, p. 25.
[14] p. 40.

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everybody. It must be made as free and as easy of access as is God's air. Religion is necessary to make men virtuous. Religion goes to the root. If it is right, all is right. So before flooding India with socialistic ideas, the land should first be flooded with spiritual ideas. We must give up all our little quarrels and differences and find unity in religion. We must understand and realize the ideal of oneness of all. Swamiji asserts : 'None can regenerate this land of ours without the practical application and effective operation of this ideal of the oneness of things.'[16]

Thirdly, the present system of negative education should be replaced by a man-making, positive education. According to Swamiji, positive education is one 'by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet'.[17]

Mass Education

The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolising of the whole of education and training of the land among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we should spread education. We have to bring all the ideals to the masses and raise them.

The orthodox superstition of '*Don't-touch-ism*' should go. 'It is a form of mental disease', says Swamiji. It is irreligion. Swamiji exhorts : Kick such customs out ; go at once and bring all who are poor, miserable, wretched and downtrodden together. Unless they rise, the Mother will not awake.

Further, we have to work for the *uplift of the women*. All nations have attained greatness by paying proper respect to women. 'If women are raised, then their children will be, their noble actions glorify the name of the country, then will culture, knowledge, power and devotion awaken in the country.' Right type of education should be given to women so that they may turn out to be ideal women.

Lastly, we have to broaden our *cultural outlook*. We have many things to learn from the West. We must learn her arts and sciences. We have to gain in material knowledge, in the power of organization and in bringing the best results out of the smallest of causes. But in learning from the West, the danger of blind imitation should be avoided. We must assimilate what we need. We must subordinate our knowledge of western science and learning to our national ideal, viz., spirituality and purity. Spiritual knowledge alone can destroy our miseries for ever ; any other knowledge satisfies wants only for a time.

We have also a great mission to fulfil. The West with its scientific race is heading towards its own destruction. She needs spirituality to subordinate materialism and to save herself. Let us give spirituality to her and save not only the West but the whole world from self-destruction.

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[15] *Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems*, p. 28.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

Modern positivism, founded by Auguste Comte, which excludes from philosophy everything except the natural phenomena or properties of knowable things, and holds all inquiry into causes whether efficient or final to be useless and unprofitable, commits a great mistake by regarding the dependent and therefore unreal existence to be independent and real. Kapila did not commit that mistake. To him matter was altogether a different thing from what we see, touch, taste, hear and smell. It is something unknown and unknowable, which coming in contact with the senses produces the universe of phenomena. So the subject matter of Comte's philosophy, instead of being an independent existence, is merely a result of the union of the self with the not-self, of Purusha with Prakriti. That philosophy which deals with mere contingent truths is not worthy of holding the holy and high title of philosophy which literally means a love for real knowledge or knowledge of the reality. The matter of Kapila is independent of the senses, hence a philosopher of Kapila's school, must have to go beyond his senses, if he wants to come face to face with Prakriti, or the primal matter, the mother of the universe.

—Swami Ramakrishnananda.

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ON THE ADVENT OF SRI KRISHNA

M. V. SRIDATTA SARMA

I

"Yo rāmah kṛṣṇatāmetya sārvātmyam prāpya leelayā.
Atoṣayaddaivamounipatalam tam natosmyaham."
(Kṛṣṇopaniṣad).

"I offer my salutations to that Rama who assumed the form of Krishna in sport and manifested Himself in all beings and gladdened the multitude of denizens of the celestial zones as also the ascetics."

Various derivations have been given by scholars to the term Kṛṣṇa in literary works. According to Amarasimha, the word signifies one who is capable of accomplishing every thing (*sarvam karotīti kṛṣṇaḥ*). Another interpretation assigned by him is one who causes injury to the fiends (*daityān karṣatīti kṛṣṇaḥ*). A third meaning suggested is *Kṛṣṇavarnatvāt kṛṣṇaḥ* i.e., because of His dark hue, He is styled Kṛṣṇa.[1] Yaska in his Nirukta also adopts the same interpretation. In the Śāntiparva of the *Mahābhārata* Krishna says to Arjuna, 'Because of my dark complexion, I am called Krishna, Oh Arjuna.' कृष्णो वर्णस्य मे यस्मात् कृष्णोऽहमर्जुन ॥ Ch. 352, Sl. 14.

In the Brahmavaivarta Purana, there are some more elucidations: Kṛṣṇa means the Universal Spirit. *Kṛṣi* denotes a generic term, while *na* conveys the idea of the self, thus bringing forth the meaning viz.: Omniscient Spirit. (*Kṛṣiśca sarva vacano nakāraścātmavācakaḥ sarvātmā ca param brahma tena kṛṣṇaḥ prakīrtitaḥ*). A second explanation offered is: one who commands the esteem and respect of all, so much so that they devote or dedicate their lives in his service (Dāsya). (*Kṛṣi sad bhaktivacano nasca tad dāsya kārakaḥ, dāsyapradātā yaḥ sa kṛṣṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ.*) He is the Lord, who confers servitude. In the *Bhāgavata, dāsyavṛtti* is held to be one of the modes of Upāsana. A third meaning adopted is in the sense of causation, in view of the Absolute being the source or cause (seed bed) of creation. (*Kṛṣiśca sarvavacano nakāro bījavācakaḥ, sarva bījaṁ paraṁ brahma kṛṣṇa ityabhidīyate.*)

In the term *Kṛṣṇa*, the syllable *ṛ* is derivative of Brahma. *Ṣa* denotes Śiva and *ṇa* is indicative of *dharma*. The letter *a* is suggestive of Vishnu, who has for his abode the Śveta Dwipa. The Visarga conveys the sense of Naranārāyaṇa and the accumulation of all *tejas*. He is a mass of all brilliance and splendour and is the one support, as also the seed or cause of every thing. (*Sarveṣām tejasām rāśiḥ sarvamūrti svarūpakaḥ.*) He manifests Himself in different forms.

According to another interpretation *kṛṣi* signifies the eradication of Karma (residuary operative). *Na* is *dāsyavācaka*, while *a* is *dātṛvācaka* (in the sense of conferer of beatitude in response to the supplications offered). He is the One who cuts asunder all the knots of action and in return confers on the aspirant Haridāsya. From this, He is remembered as Kṛṣṇa. *Kṛṣ* denotes the unmoving or static force. (*Kṛṣi niśceṣṭavacano nakāro bhaktivācakaḥ. Akāraḥ prāptivacanaḥ tena kṛṣṇaḥ prakīrtitaḥ*).

"Krishnajanmakhanda" Ch. 13. sl. 60-61.

There is one more derivation given which brings forth the idea of deliverance or the conferment of beatitude (the *summum bonum*). (*Kṛṣir nirvāṇa vacano nakāro mokṣavācakaḥ*) Kṛṣṇa is the granter of the highest bliss. His name is charming and instils reverence.

[1] It is stated that Vishnu is white in Satya Yuga, red in Treta, yellow in Dvapara and dark in the Kali Age. That which is most perfect is known as Krishna, which is a bye-word for the Infinite.

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Kṛṣṇeti sundaraṁ nāmaṁ maṅgalam
bhaktidāyakaṁ
kakāroccāranādbhaktaḥ kaivalyaṁ
mṛtyujanmahaṁ.
Op. cit. 65.

By the very repetition of the syllable Ka, the neophyte will obtain immunity from the cycle of births and deaths. By the repetition of *ṛ*, the aspirant will become His devoted servant and by *na* he begets the divine communion. The deity is assimilated in the bhakta. A likeness or resemblance will be noticed (*Sārūpya*),[2] by the utterance of the Visarga.

tatsārūpyaṁ visargādeva labhante nātra
saṁśayaḥ.
kakāroccāranādeva vepante yama-
kiṅkarāḥ.
Op. cit. 67.

By the repetition of the syllable *ka*, the attendants of Yama will flee away and stand at a league's distance. By the utterance of *ṣa* all evils are wiped off. *Na* is a curer of diseases. While repeating *a*, one conquers death.

ṛkārokter na tiṣṭanti ṣakarāt pātakāni ca.
nakaroccāranād rogā akārānmṛtyurevaca.
dhruvam sarve palāyante nāmoccarana
bhīravaḥ
smṛtyukti śravaṇodyogāt kṛṣṇanāmno
vrajeśvaraḥ
Op. cit. 68-69.

(The fiends can neither hear nor pronounce the name of the Lord.)

Another etymological derivation is given in the *Mahābhārata* (Udyoga Parva : Ch. LXX-5) according to which Kṛṣiḥ denotes existence (*kṛṣiḥ sattāvacanaḥ*) while *ṇa* is expressive of intelligence and bliss (*nakaro nirvṛtivacanaḥ*). The union of these two words is called Krishna or the Eternal Brahman.

कृषिर्भूवाचकः शब्दो णश्च निर्वृतिवाचकः ।
विष्णुस्तद्भावयोगाच्च कृष्णो भवति शाश्वतः ॥

[2] There are four stages for realisation. (*a*) attainment of the vicinity of the Divine Form (Sāmipya). (*b*) Remaining in the same world or sphere (Sālokya), (*c*) Attaining the sameness of form (Sārupya), and (*d*) Intimate union, or identification or absorption with the deity (Sāyujya).

II

Sri Rama's personality was so fascinating that it produced an everlasting effect (impression) in the minds of the forest-dwelling sages. It was stupefying even for men (*pumsāṁ mohana rūpāya*). Hanuman describes Rama thus : 'That Rama with the eyes resembling the lotus petals captivates the minds of all beings. (*Rāmah kamalapatrākṣaḥ sarva bhūta manoharaḥ.*)' Even the fiend Mārica praises Rama's handsome form. He says : 'This scion of the Raghu's race is really handsome, with the bow and arrows held in his lotus shaped hands.' (*Raghunandana eṣa sundaraḥ karapadmārpita bāṇa kārmukaḥ.*)

The Bhaktas could not afford to part with Rama at the end of his mission, being filled with ecstasy. These great souls striving after spiritual knowledge and concentrating their minds in perfect absorption into the one object of their meditation dedicated their souls to him and even thought of clasping him. No obstacles could deviate these masters of their selves while in the pursuance of their ends (in that state of superconsciousness). They were assured by the Lord that in his next incarnation, he would afford them full opportunities to clasp him. This forms the subject matter of the *Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad* (the eighth incarnation of Vishnu), while the sages were reborn as Gopis, who sported with Him. The anecdote serves as a hint or forecast to the full-fledged Avatar of Vishṇu in the form of Kṛṣṇa. The forest dwellers felt satisfied for having accomplished their ends and they remained in a state of bliss.

III

The Upaniṣad discusses at full length the import or the part played by the different characters who came in contact with Kṛṣṇa. In short, this is an allegorical or metaphorical account. The three *guṇas* or constituents are assigned thus : the *sattva* or the quality of goodness to Rudra ; the *rājasic* (passion) trait to Brahma and the devotees ; and the *tāmasic* aspect (state of inertia) to the fiends.

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Nanda stands for the Supreme Spirit, while Yasoda plays the role of the mistress in the house of liberation. Vasudeva symbolizes the Vedic Texts, while the quintessence of the holy knowledge is centred round Balarama and Kṛṣṇa, who as a sequel to the prayers whispered silently by the Bhaktas descended down on the earth. Kṛṣṇa rallied round and played in sport with the cowherds, maids and the denizens of the celestial zone at Brindavan.

The 16,100 gopis and cows who were associated with Kṛṣṇa are mere personifications of the hymns of the Vedas or what all they uttered and sang before Him were revelations of divine knowledge (the mystical writings attached to the Brahmanas i.e. Upaniṣads). The staff held by the cowherds stands for the lotus-seated Brahma, who witnessed the scene. The bamboo flute and the horn which served as musical instruments represent Śiva and Mahendra respectively. (While Śiva's body is made up of Nāda, Mahendra strikes it with the thunderbolt). The villages and groves surrounding Gokula, which form the background for the divine recreation is interpreted as Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of Narayana. The trees around indicate the sages, who, as it were, remained motionless, transfixed into that state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi and eschewing all those knots arising from illusion, misapprehension and irresolution.

ātmārāmā vihita ratayo nirvikalpe samādhau
jñānotsekāt vighaṭita tamogranthayah satvaniṣṭhāḥ.
(*Veni Samhara* : I-23).

They were like those wise men, who have realized the higher truths of religion with a view to reunite with the Absolute, cutting asunder the effects of Karma and warding off all doubts.[3] Avarice and anger represent the demoniacal forms which disturb the seeker after Truth.

Lord Hari in the form of the cowherd waged war against these forces (evil spirits) and suppressed them. These were in other words suggestive of the Danavas, who disturbed the eternal order of righteousness and moral virtues. As if by illusion, the entire world was stupefied by His Leelas (unfathomable sport). The result was that the earth became unconquerable by evil forces, while the sages and the twice-born became bold enough to continue their austerities. Like a wizard, Kṛṣṇa transformed Rudra into a flute. In an instant, the prowess and knowledge of the Devas was captured. Their minds were turned down from all speech. Their associations with Him rendered them fearless, remaining in that state of bliss.[4] The serpent Sesha assumed the form of Balarama, while the eternal Lord descended down to earth as Kṛṣṇa.

The wrestler Chāṇūra stands for malignity, while the pugilistic encounterer Muṣṭika (with his fisticuff) is a bye-word for envy. The elephant demon Kuvalayāpīda is an epithet for arrogance (insolence). Agha, the serpent demon, is a synonym of dreadful diseases like black leprosy. Baka, the bird demon is always remembered for his pride. The ruler Kaṁsa is none other than Kali himself—the very personification of wickedness.

Mother Rohini serves as the asylum for compassion, while Satyabhāma remains as an attribute for Mother Earth, who silently bears with perseverance and tolerance the misdeeds of mortals. Sudama, the next neighbour of Kṛṣṇa in the days of His childhood is the very embodiment of mental quietness (equipoise), being free from all passions. Akrūra as his very name connotes is an example of sincerity and genuineness. The noble Uddhava serves

[3] *bhidyate hṛdaya granthiśchidyante sarva saṁśayaḥ.*
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare.
—Cf. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* — II-8.

[4] *yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*
ānandam brahmaṇo vidwān na bibheti kutaścaneti.
—*Taittiriya Upaniṣad* : II-9-1.

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as a model for all to follow in the tendency of drawing the mind from evil propensities.

Vishnu establishes himself as Lakshmi in the conch-shell. The ocean of milk springs up and the thundering clouds shower rains. Assuming the form of a child Kṛṣṇa sports as before in the great ocean. With a view to suppress the evil forces at work and to defend the meek, the Lord came down to earth. He devised the discus (Sudarśana), which is indicative of the composite part of the Supreme Spirit. His splendour is shown by the glittering sword (representing Rudra or Maheśvara Śakti). The mortar and the cord with which Kṛṣṇa was fastened symbolize the Sage Kasyapa and Aditi, the parents of all living beings (worldly existence). The discus and the conch denote absolution and final beatitude attained by constant action and effort (*Cakraṁ śaṅkhaṁ ca saṁsiddhiṁ binduṁ ca sarva mūrdhani*). The *bindu* is indicative of the highest centre — the thousand petalled lotus (Sahasrāra) situated in the head. The bow Sārṅga is Kṛṣṇa's own artifice.

The lotus stem held by Kṛṣṇa for amusement indicates the seed of the universe. Garuda, the celestial eagle signifies the fig tree (Vatabhānda). The basil or Rādhikā is suggestive of Bhakti (devotion), as also Kriya (comprehension or intellect) that is manifest in all beings.

In *Gopālatāpinyupaniṣad* (Uttara), we find a continuation of the metaphorical description of Kṛṣṇa. The three constituents together with the conceit or conception of individuality (ego sense) serve as His four hands. The conch held by Him is representative of the five elements, while the discus is signified by the wavering mind (*cala svarūpaṁ atyanta manascakraṁ nigadyate*). Primordial *Māyā* is the horny bow Sārṅga (*ādya māyā bhavecchārṅgaḥ*). The Padma or lotus is expressive of the Universe (*padmaṁ viśvaṁ kare sthitaṁ*). The mace held by Him is indicative of the first science (knowledge). The bracelet worn by Him, comprise duty, wealth and desire (three of the ends in life). His neck is formed of what is beyond properties or qualities and it is decorated with the garland of eternity. The Supreme Sattva quality (which is immovable, unchangeable and remains perpetually the same) serves Him as the crown. The imperishable existences which spread far and wide decorate Him as ear-rings. The person, who meditates on Him will attain salvation.

'To him, who is engrossed in meditation, will be revealed the nature of the Self. In this state, the devotee will realize that he is identical with the Infinite. To him, I will grant the knowledge of the Self.'

"dhyāyen, mama priyo nityaṁ sa mokṣaṁ adhigacchati.
sa mukto bhavati, tasmai ca ātmānaṁ dadāmīti."
— Gopālottaratāpinyupaniṣad.

The Supreme Lord represents that mighty force or form which remains neither split nor unsplit. He serves as a sign of the collective unit or the Universal Spirit. From the point of view of the collective unit or the aggregate of all parts, He serves the purpose of a single whole or integral part (Unitarian or Samaṣṭi). Each part in turn (Vyaṣṭi) remains consubstantially the same with the whole. (*tasmānnābhinnam nābhirbhinnamābhirbhinna na vai vibhuh. — Kṛṣṇopaniṣad*)

By virtue of the knowledge of the identity of the whole (Hiranyagarbha) with the part, the conception of the totality remains. In the absence of that knowledge on the part of the Jiva, the question of individuality will arise.

"samaṣṭirīśaḥ sarveṣāṁ svātma tādātmya vedanāt.
tadabhāvāt tadanyeca jñāyante vyaṣṭi saṁjñayā."
(Pancadasi)

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KURUKSHETRA—THE LAND OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

MALLIKA CLARE GUPTA

LESS than a hundred miles from Delhi, just off a modern macadamized motor road, is the ancient and historic site of the battle of Kurukshetra. Besides being the scene of the famous conflict between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, as related in the great epic of India, the *Mahābhārata,* it has other claims to glory as well.

There, in ancient times, on the banks of the River Saraswati, Rishis chanted in sonorous tones the glorious Sanskrit of the Vedas; the gods themselves performed sacrifices and great sages realized the immortal Self. There were Ashramas in Kurukshetra with thousands of students. These Ashramas were like universities where the Vedic culture and philosophy as well as secular subjects were taught. Kurukshetra has existed from the earliest dawn of Aryan history in India. It was settled by one of the five original groups of Aryans who migrated into (or lived in) India thousands of years ago. Located to the northwest of modern Delhi, it comprised many villages and towns with its capital at Sthāniśwar, now known as Thāneśwar. Sthāniśwar may be translated as the place of Īśwara, or the land of God. For ages and ages pilgrims and devotees have cherished in their hearts its holy tradition, for Kurukshetra is the place where Sri Krishna taught the immortal truths of the *Bhagavad Gītā.*

An ancient text relates that King Kuru, who was an ancestor of both the Pandavas and the Kauravas and whose date may be roughly calculated by studying the names of the kings from Yudhisthira (eldest brother of the Pandavas) back to Kuru as one-thousand years before the battle of Kurukshetra, came to this land in a golden chariot and out of its gold made a plough. He borrowed Shiva's bull and Yama's buffalo and started to plough the earth. Soon Indra came and asked the king what he was doing. Kuru replied, 'I am preparing the land for the cultivation of the eight-fold virtues.' (This has reference to the disciplines of Yoga.) Indra asked, 'Where is the seed?' And Kuru replied, 'Oh, it is in my possession.' Indra went on his way and Kuru returned to his ploughing. Then Vishnu appeared and asked of the king the same questions Indra had asked. Again, Kuru gave the same replies. But Vishnu said, 'Give me the seed and I will sow it for you.' Thereupon King Kuru extended his right arm and it was cut into pieces by Vishnu's Chakra (invincible, circular-shaped weapon), and the pieces were sown in the field. In the same way Kuru offered the rest of his limbs and, finally, his head. Vishnu was pleased with his sacrifice, blessed him, and disappeared. Then Indra, who had witnessed all this, returned and told Kuru that any boon he might ask of him would be granted. Kuru asked two boons; one, that this land would be a holy land and that it would be named after him; the other, that anyone dying here would go to heaven whether he had been a saint or a sinner. So, the land became known as the field of Kuru, or Kurukshetra, and tradition holds it to be most holy.

Kurukshetra is as hoary with history as it is with legend and tradition. In fact, these combine to give it continuity from the most remote times until today. The date of the battle of Kurukshetra, which sets it on the historical stage, has, however, often been in question. In the *Mahābhārata* there is a reference, made just before the battle took place, to certain inauspicious planetary positions which, it was believed, foreshadowed unprecedented death and destruction on the battlefield. From this astronomical reference calculations have been made and some people believe that the date of the battle of Kuruk-

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shtra is about 2500 B.C., approximately 4500 years ago. Other sources date it about 1500 B.C. Whatever the date may be we find that from the time of that devastating battle down to the end of the 5th century A.D. Kurukshetra does not feature in the innumerable wars of conquest recorded in Indian history. We have to rely on tradition and the stray mention of it by writers and travellers. The invasions of the Persians (beginning of the 5th century B.C.) and of the Greeks (3rd century B.C.) as well as the incursions of other foreign forces do not appear to have affected Kurukshetra adversely to any great extent, for when Megasthenes visited it in about 300 B.C. he found it very prosperous. There was peace and plenty, and art and industry flourished under royal patronage. During the ascendancy of Buddhism it still retained its position as a great centre of Hindu culture. In fact, from about 270 B.C. to 470 A.D., throughout the eras of the Mauryan Empire and the Gupta (Golden Age) Dynasty, Kurukshetra prospered both materially and spiritually. But towards the close of the 5th century A.D. when the Huns, the fierce barbarians who came from the steppes of Central Asia, over-ran parts of upper India Kurukshetra was in the front line of defence. History tells us that the rulers of Thaneswar stand pre-eminent among the Indian kings who distinguished themselves in defending the country against the invaders. These incursions of the Huns continued during most of the 6th century until the outsiders were repelled. In the beginning of the 7th century (606 A.D.) King Harsha Vardhana of the royal house of Thaneswar came to power. He also took over the throne of the King of Kanauj after the assassination of that monarch by conspirators. Harsha has been described as a great warrior, a scholar, a patron of learning and a connoisseur of the arts. He was the author of several plays himself and the well known writer, Bāna, was one of his courtiers. Bāna described Thaneswar as a place of great wealth and religion, and he said that the atmosphere was full of the sound of Vedic hymns. During Harsha's rule half of the income of the State was given to the spreading of education and culture. The place was visited by scholars, students and pilgrims from all parts of India. It was during the reign of Harsha that the Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsiang (Yuan Chwang), visited Thaneswar which then included the whole area of Kurukshetra. He wrote in glowing terms about the life there at that time. He found the government honestly administered and the inhabitants truthful and of pure moral principle. He said the city of Thaneswar had one-hundred temples and that there was prosperous trade with other lands. The climate was good and the soil productive.

After the death of Harsha, without heir, there were bitter contests for the empire he had consolidated, which stretched from upper India to Bihar and Orissa. Though the civil strife recorded in history for the next four-hundred years is like a marathon chess game, which involved most of the kingdoms of India, Kurukshetra again seems to have been left to itself, probably because the capital of Harsha's empire had been removed from Thaneswar to Kanauj, and so Kurukshetra was not a political prize. We may presume that conditions remained more or less peaceful in that area, that it was not strategically important and that it was considered by all to be a holy land. However, when the Muslim invaders from the west began to pour into India from the 11th century onwards, Kurukshetra was constantly involved in the struggles with the invaders. In fact, it experienced repeated invasions, occupations, and cruel domination by the foreign rulers. The great Rajputs, the valiant Sikhs, and the heroic Maharattas fought bravely against the enemies. The famous battles of Kaithal, Karnal, Thaneswar, and the three momentous battles of Panipet, all within the Kurukshetra area, inflicted great sufferings. This reached its height during the reign of Aurangzeb, the most bigoted of the emperors (1658-1707) and continued down to the invasion of Ahmed Shah Abdali (Durrani) (1761). The glorious and ancient temples were demolished, images were dashed to

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pieces, seats of learning desecrated, and cities sacked. After these repeated and devastating onslaughts most of the inhabitants of the area at last migrated towards the Himalayas.

Today, the area indeed looks like an old battlefield. Much of it is without trees and for vast expanses one sees little cultivation. Here and there are large mounds of earth overgrown with wild grass under which, one feels, trophies of the wars could easily be found if one but scratched the earth with a fingernail! There are many temples and small shrines but none of these is very old. However, they serve to remind us of the glorious past as they are built on the ruins of the old. It is to the holy men and the Sannyasins of ancient times that we owe what details we have today of Kurukshetra. They had no worldly goods to lose and they had gone beyond fear, so they roamed about the area throughout the awful years, living in caves, where unmolested they could meditate in peace. These holy men marked with stones the places where shrines and temples had been and occasionally they offered their worship to these. They retained and handed down to their disciples the history, which we now call tradition, of the holy land of Kurukshetra. Today, a visitor is shown the place where Karna, one of the greatest heroes of the *Mahābhārata,* was killed by a powerful weapon from the mighty bow of Arjuna when one of his chariot wheels sank deep into the earth. Bhishma, the "grand old man" of the *Mahābhārata,* grand uncle to both the Pandavas and the Kauravas, was fatally wounded during the battle and like the true warrior that he was lay on a bed of arrows, there to expire like a hero. Bhishma asked Arjuna for some water with which to quench his thirst, but as Arjuna knew that he would not drink ordinary water he pierced the earth with an arrow and out gushed a spring of pure, clear water. (This is an allusion to the origin of Bhishma who was supposed to have been born of Ganga.) This spot is about three miles from the Kurukshetra tank and is called Ban Ganga. Before the battle of Kurukshetra the five Pandava brothers, in exile, spent some time in the Kamyaka Forest and this is believed to have been on the site of the present town of Kamada. About five miles from Thaneswar is the village of Amin, situated on a huge mound. There, Dronacharya, the guru in warfare of both the Pandavas and the Kauravas, used the military strategy called, "Chakra-vyuha," a surrounding tactic much like the pincer movement of the last war. It was there that Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, lost his life. People say that the name of the village, Amin, is a corruption of his name. About one-half mile from this village is the place where Arjuna killed Jayadhratha, who was responsible for the death of his son. Near Thaneswar is a Kali temple where, it is said, the Pandavas worshipped, this form of the Deity just before the battle. This temple is one of the fifty-two most sacred temples of the Devi which are found in various parts of India.

Besides places associated with the battle of Kurukshetra the area abounds in sites connected with other great traditional interests. One is shown the place where the ancient sages Vishwamitra and Vasishta had their hermitages and practised austerities. There is a cave known as " Vasishta's cave " with a sacred well nearby where the ashes of the dead are sometimes put. It is claimed that Vaman, the Dwarf, or the fourth incarnation of Vishnu, was born near Amin. The immortal Parasuram, guru of Dronacharya, performed Vedic sacrifices in this area. One is told that the town of Kaithal (corrupted from Kapisthal—land of monkeys) is the birthplace of the great Hanuman, the heroic devotee of the Lord in his Incarnation as Rama. These are only a few of the three-hundred and sixty "tirthas" (ancient and holy places) within the area of Kurukshetra. As recent as 1948 a part of the ashes of Mahatma Gandhi was immersed in the Brahmasar Tank in Kurukshetra. Kurukshetra is visited by thousands of pilgrims every year, some on their way to the Himalayan shrines of Kedarnath and Bhadri Narayan. It is said that the great Śankaracharya stopped at Kurukshetra on his way to the Himalayas and this also adds holiness to it for the pil-

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grims of today. During solar eclipses hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all parts of India gather at Kurukshetra.

Although the ancient glories, the shrines, the temples, the great Ashramas, the sacred forests, the holy rivers and ponds have disappeared or dried up and little trace of them is left, there is one particular spot which is claimed to be much as it was some 3500, or more, years ago. It, in fact, has always been considered as the most sacred spot in the whole of Kurukshetra. Three miles from Thaneswar under a gnarled and very ancient Banyan tree, said to be the living witness of the event, is the place where according to tradition Sri Krishna, who had assumed the role of the Charioteer of Arjuna, taught the immortal truths of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The Pandava army was approaching from Viratnagar in the west and the Kauravas' from Hastinapur in the east when Arjuna asked the Divine Charioteer to place his chariot in the middle of the field, between the two opposing forces. The war-chariot of Arjuna, banners and ensign flying and drawn by four majestic white stallions keyed up for the fray, was brought to a sudden halt. Kings from all over India with their greatest warriors and armies had joined one or the other of the combatants. Never before had so many great warriors gathered together. They were all in battle dress, protected by intricate armour which glittered and shone like jewels. Their colorful costumes and turbans were beset with gems, some of fabulous value. It is believed by *some* that the great hero, Karna, wore as his turban decoration the famous diamond later known as the Koh-i-noor, which had been given to him by Sri Krishna. The Pandava army consisted of seven divisions, that is approximately 150,000 war-chariots and the same number of specially trained and armoured elephants, and 450,000 cavalry and 750,000 foot soldiers. The army of the Kauravas consisted of 11 divisions. As these two massive armies were advancing towards the battlefield the blare of trumpets and the blowing of horns and conch-shells pierced the air time and again, as each great warrior's challenging blast was accepted and flung back from the other side. Colourful banners and flags were flying in the wind, cymbals were clashing, horses neighing, elephants trumpeting and there was loud beating of war drums. The mingling of these mighty omens of battle was deafening. War had been declared and as both sides awaited the commands of their leaders there was comparative quiet again. When Arjuna, standing in his chariot between the two armies, saw his brothers, cousins, nephews, uncles, and other revered members of the two families, and all the other great warriors thus arrayed against each other he lost all interest in the forthcoming battle. He could not bring himself to take part in the awful slaughter which was imminent. It was at this point that the immortal dialogue known as the *Bhagavad-Gītā* took place.

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* is considered by Hindus to be almost an encyclopedia of spiritual counsel. Many are the commentaries written by eminent scholars down the ages, highlighting and eulogizing particular aspects of the teachings, and various are the opinions as to which path is superior to the others but Sri Ramakrishna, who could pinpoint the most abstruse philosophies and reconcile diverse and conflicting opinions, has given us in one word the essence of the teachings of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Sri Ramakrishna said that if you keep repeating the word, *Gītā*, it becomes T(y)āgi. A Tyāgi is a man of renunciation, one who has renounced or surrendered himself to God. Whether God be considered as the Brahman of the Jnanis, the Paramatman of the Yogis, the Lord and Doer of all actions of the Karmis, or the beloved Lord, God incarnate, of the Bhaktas, the individualized ego, the small self, must be surrendered, must be renounced. So, through the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Sri Krishna taught Arjuna the various ways by which one may surrender himself and all his actions to God.

As a climax to these teachings Sri Krishna gave Arjuna the vision of his universal form, or the visual experience that all forms, all space,

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all time and all causality are in the Almighty Being. It was as if Arjuna suddenly saw a blazing Form which contained the whole universe. The sun, the moon, the stars and planets which embraced everything that was or had been. In wonder he gazed and saw that within that Resplendent One were myriads of faces, mouths, bodies, limbs. All the Gods, the ancient sages, the noble ancestors,—all were in that universal Form. Then Arjuna saw that the great warriors of Kurukshetra, his own kith and kin, with their chariots, horses, elephants, whole armies—all things—were being mercilessly crushed in the massive jaws of the universal Being, the Doer of all actions. In one mighty moment past, present and future were telescoped into one and Arjuna stood face to face with timeless TIME. The impact of this staggering experience swept Arjuna into a mental whirlpool; his senses reeled and he felt that he was being forsaken by his mind. He grasped for the memory of his beloved companion, counsellor and guide, Sri Krishna, and with folded palms implored the universal Being to show him again that gentle, human form to which he was so happily accustomed. The infinite Being, infinite in might and in mercy, again assumed the form of the familiar Krishna, and Arjuna fell prostrate at his feet.

Tradition claims that this experience of Arjuna's and the teachings imparted to him by Sri Krishna, which are recorded in the *Bhagavad-Gītā,* took place at Kurukshetra, under the ancient Banyan tree believed to be the living witness of it all. The place is called Jyotiśwar, which means the brilliance of the Light of God. It is called so because here Arjuna had the vision of the Resplendent One. Just besides the tree is a large pool of water and devotees believe that the pool of Jyotiśwar still retains some of that splendour. True, it is unusually brilliant. The reflection of the sun on its waters is almost blinding. Perhaps science could give some reason for this phenomenon but the accepted explanation has satisfied millions and millions of people for the last 3,500 or even more, years.

Whether the *Bhagavad-Gītā* as we know it today was interpolated at some later date into the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*, as some modern scholars think, is of little importance to those who love the *Gītā* for they 'have come to eat the mangoes, not to count the leaves on the tree,' to use an expression of Sri Ramakrishna. Epics were sometimes handed down from generation to generation, long before they were compiled and put into script. The verity or the antiquity of the actual happenings of the *Gītā* are not affected by the date of its compilation. It may even be that the teachings of Sri Krishna took only a few minutes of time, as we know it, somewhat like the experiences Swami Vivekananda had when touched by his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, for the teacher was God Himself and the disciple His own counterpart.

Tradition also holds to the belief that Jyotiśwar is the sacred place where the Gītā was enacted, because from time immemorial great scolars, renowned *sadhus* and saints, and earnest devotees from all over India have made pilgrimages to Kurukshetra for the express purpose of reading, or hearing read, the holy *Bhagavad-Gītā* at Jyotiswar, under the ancient Banyan tree, beside the pool of the Light of God.

Than the Gita no better commentary on the Vedas has been written or can be written. The essence of the Shrutis, or of the Upanishads, is hard to be understood, seeing that there are so many commentators, each one trying to interpret in his own way. Then the Lord Himself comes, He who is the inspirer of the Shrutis, to show us the meaning of them, as the preacher of the Gita, and to-day India wants nothing better, the world wants nothing better than that method of interpretation. ....You find in the Gita no attempt at torturing any one of them (texts of the Upanishads). ....Even the Karma Kanda is taken up, and it is shown that although it cannot give salvation direct, but only indirectly, yet that is also valid; images are valid indirectly; ceremonies, forms, everything is valid only with one condition, purity of the heart. — SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

"Nirvikalpa Samadhi: Its Nature and Attainment" forms the notes of a class talk by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder-leader of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, on *Vivekachudamani* delivered on May 9, 1935.

Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, is a retired Professor of Philosophy of the Annamalai University and has been a regular contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari.*

Sri T. R. Rajagopala Aiyer is an Advocate from Cauvery Nagar, Trichy District. "The Story of the Virtuous Butcher", is the concluding part of his article which appeared in our April, 1965 issue. The article forms a synopsis of the "Vyadha Gita" that forms a part of the *Mahābhārata.*

Sri O. R. Krishnaswami is Principal, College of Rural Education, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt.

Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma, M.A., an Indologist, is an official in the Palace of the Maharaja of Mysore. Here he deals with the "Advent of Sri Krishna" as it has been depicted in the minor Upaniṣads, dealing mostly with the allegorical meaning attached to Sri Krishna's life.

Mrs Mallika Clare Gupta, now residing at Calcutta, came in contact with the Vedanta Movement a long time ago, while she was in America. Her article on "Kurukshetra" is a mythical cum historical study and is informative.

CONSOLIDATION BEFORE EXPANSION

When we are thinking of the 4th five year plan and are intent upon expanding industries under the supervision of quasi or semi or fully Government-owned corporations, it is a sad thing that the working of some of the already functioning industries is not toned up. Here are some extracts from a report, that appeared in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* April 25, 1965 about the working of the Fertiliser Corporation of India, which is disheartening.

The Fertiliser Corporation of India has come in for strong criticism by the Committee on Public Undertakings whose report was placed on the table of the Lok Sabha.

The Committee observes that it was expected of the Fertiliser Corporation that with its past experience in establishing fertiliser plants at Sindri and Nangal, it would avoid some of the mistakes that have been committed in the planning and execution of its later projects. It is time that the Corporation applied itself to the proper planning of projects and ensured that they are executed with the utmost speed and economy so as to avoid imports of fertilisers which have been a drain on our foreign exchange resources.

The Sindri unit of the Corporation, which is one of the first major ventures in the public sector, has been facing heavy weather since 1959 and due to various reasons it has not been possible to work the plant to full capacity. Its rehabilitation is now estimated to cost Rs. 15.11 crores. Even so, no positive steps appear to have been taken so far to rehabilitate the unit and if a scheme which calls for radical changes in the production pattern and entails heavy investment is now approved and actively implemented, the results are not likely to be achieved before 1970.

Chief Problems

The chief problems of Sindri are (1) low production, (2) inadequate supply of right type of raw materials, (3) poor maintenance of plant and equipment, (4) excessive inventory and above all, (5) over-manning and unhappy labour-management relations.

The Sindri factory has been suffering since there is a loss in production of 20 tons of ammonia per day (valued at Rs. 15,000) due to delay in allocation of foreign exchange for the additional machinery worth Rs. 20 lakhs.

The foreign exchange was released only recently and actual order placed in September, 1964 and the additional equipment was expected to be commissioned in the second quarter of 1966. The loss of production due to non-availability of sufficient coke oven gas and lack of spare equipment amounted to approximately 127,000 tonnes

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of ammonia valued at about Rs. 10 crores, during the period 1959 to March 1964. The Committee has recommended that Government should examine the matter with a view to fixing responsibility for the unconscionable delay in a matter of this importance.

Expert Body

The Committee regrets to observe that there has been a delay of about 3 years in placing orders for additional equipment recommended by an Expert Committee as far back as 1961 and that it would take another 2 years before it is actually installed. It is difficult for the Committee to appreciate why it was not possible for Government to arrange foreign exchange worth Rs. 20 lakhs which could have saved loss in production of fertilisers worth Rs. 10 crores by March 1964, as also avoided their imports.

The Committee says, there has been "vacillation" on the part of the Board of Directors of the Fertiliser Corporation and the Government in taking immediate remedial measures. It has observed that between the execution of new projects and the rehabilitation of Sindri unit, the latter should have been given high priority by the Management and the Corporation.

The Committee refers to the shortage of 27,898 tons of gypsum costing Rs. 14 lakhs at Sindri in October 1961, and expresses surprise that the only steps taken by Government against the Resident Director was non-extension of his tenure. (PTI)

The question now is what use are these industries if they do not work on a business-like basis, earning sufficient profits to prove their worth, if the persons in charge of the corporations are not able to foresee their requirements, and if the Government cannot immediately come to their help, if and when they ask for it ? Should red-tapism be faced by Government-owned industries as well?

Let us now consider the problems of Sindri pointed out in the above report.

1. *Low production* is probably explained by the want of additional machinery. Government's attitude to its requirement seemed to have been unhelpful if we read the Committee's criticism. Industries in the private sector sometimes complain that the Government's treatment towards them is step-motherly. But this goes far beyond that. The Government seems to be careful to institute fresh industries and not at its after-care. Otherwise it is difficult to understand why it should take 3 years for the Government to decide on the recommendations of an expert committee, to grant an exchange for only Rs. 20 lakhs.

2. *Inadequacy of raw-materials* is no excuse for the loss in production. If the corporation had thought out its requirements well in advance, paucity of raw-materials would not have resulted.

3. *Poor maintenance of plant and equipment* is a grave fault and inexcusable. It is hard to understand how a plant can give out its full service if it is not properly maintained? Will this ever be recognized by the authorities?

The last problem and one of the causes of the heavy losses seems to be this over-manning. Why was it necessary?

So many questions have arisen. The Government should speedily and effectively deal with these problems before ever thinking of expansion. Consolidation should precede expansion in any case.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (A Historical Review): By Dr R. C. Majumdar. General Printers and Publishers, 119, Dharamtala St., Calcutta-13. Pp. 182, Price Rs. 10.

In seeking to 'avoid all references to the spiritual life, mystic experience, and philosophical ideas' of Vivekananda and present the development of his personality and its effects on the world in a purely 'historical setting', Dr Majumdar set himself a most difficult task. For the central man in Swamiji is the spiritual and all else only derives from this fount. The author recognises this truth and in the first part of the book gives a rapid survey of the life and work of Vivekananda with a proper appraisal of his relation with Sri Ramakrishna and the spiritual orientation which his personality received from the Master.

This is followed up by short studies on the different aspects of the contribution of Swamiji to Indian Renaissance and the world-progress. The author devotes a chapter to Vivekananda's

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knowledge of Art and recalls how he had the daring, in those days, to question the quality of the paintings of Ravi Varma and how, through Nivedita, he was responsible for the correct evaluation of Indian Art by western critics like Havell. The writer also devotes a section to the part played by Vivekananda in the popularisation of Bengali as a language fitted to bring high philosophy to the doors of the common man. Loud protests were made against 'colloquial' use of the language in that manner, but it won encomiums from so high an authority as Rabindranath Tagore.

Dr Majumdar draws pointed attention to the precise anticipation by Swamiji of the world events, particularly the revolutions in Russia and China ushering in an age of the Sudra Civilisation. How he called upon the East — particularly India — to wake up to the developments in the West and asked the West to benefit from the live Spirit in the East, is the subject of another chapter.

An unusual treatment of a popular subject highly successful in achieving its aim.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE WITNESS: By Sadhu Ittyavirah. Perumattickunnel. Kollappilly. Kadanad P.O. Via, Palai, Kerala. Pp. 229, Price Rs. 3.50.

Ittyavirah is a rare kind of sadhu. He fits in in any milieu, he becomes one with any household, he is welcome everywhere. Here is a delightful account of the people and the conditions he has encountered during his itinerant life with a single message in his heart — the Message of Love. It is instructive to see him pointing out to men, women and children how they miss the sap of life in the very fury of their search for it, how mortals look for God everywhere except at their elbow where He is ever present if only they would perceive. Time and again he subjects the Indian Communist to an intellectual dissection and shows how superficial is the influence of this alien doctrine for an average Indian — even in Kerala. Scientists speaking unscientific language, benefactors ever remembering their goodnesses, pigs that grow faster than men, Catholics fearing to meet Protestants — all under the one roof provided by God — these and many other interesting species make the reading of these pages entertaining.

M. P. PANDIT.

REINCARNATION, THE RING OF RETURN: Edited by Eva Martin. Pub: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. Price 5 Dollars. Pp. 306.

Introducing this anthology of striking passages on Reincarnation from notable thinkers, saints, poets, novelists and mystics of all lands and of all Ages — from the pre-Christian Era down to our own — the Editor discusses in an engaging manner how this key-concept of the spiritual evolution of man has been a part of most traditions in the different parts of the world. The form has indeed varied, but the truth is the same: the soul of man is ever engaged in Godward growth. From birth to birth it enriches itself in experience and grows in stature till at last it arrives at its own Home in the Spirit from which it had originally descended as part of the Divine Scheme.

The writer points out that this faith is the bedrock not only of Religions like Hinduism, Buddhism in the East, but has formed part of many ancient traditions in far-flung countries like Fiji, North America, and England; the thought of Great Philosophers like Pythagoras and Plato is steeped with this Idea; even the early Christian writings show that this belief was accepted during those ages.

Eva Martin then goes on to draw a distinction between Reincarnation which implies rebirth in human bodies and Transmigration or metampsychosis which admits the passage of the soul through sub-human shapes and rightly points out that enlightened tradition believes only in the former. The soul, once it has arrived at the human stage, does not normally go back to the animal embodiment; if it does so at all, it can only be in case of borderline souls. She also discusses the question of the desirability or otherwise of remembering our past lives. Here, too, she takes a very sensible view that it is a 'wise dispensation of Providence not to be loaded with memories of a past that is gone, while starting a fresh round of experience.

The selections are all interesting and certainly they add to our knowledge of the subject.

M. P. PANDIT.

GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE: By T. R. Deogirikar. Pages 219. Price Rs. 2.50.

MOTILAL NEHRU: By B. R. Nanda. Pages 235. Price Rs. 2.50. Published by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, Delhi-6.

Both of these readable biographies are to be welcomed not only for the portrayal of the great lives they dwell upon but also for the light they shed on the conditions of the society and the historical development of the nation, in the shaping of which these leaders played a notable part.

Gokhale, the founder of the Servants of India Society, was openly acknowledged by Gandhiji to be his Guru. Sri Deogirikar writes about the different facets of this notable personality in a way that endears him to the reader.

One invariably thinks of Jawaharlal when the name of Motilal Nehru comes up. The biographer of Motilal is conscious of this expectation and his account is a happy blend of the life of the father and the birth and growth of the illustrious son. Many are the happy exchanges that are recorded e.g. younger Nehru writing to the elder one from England twitting him on being 'immoderately moderate'; the benevolent father wondering why the son should worry about making his ends meet when he could earn in a week what it would take Jawaharlal a year to spend, etc. An enjoyable work.

M. P. PANDIT.

MODERN INDIAN THOUGHT: By V. S. Naravane. Published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay. Pp. xiii + 310. Price Rs. 20.00.

In this book the author presents the basic notions of some prominent thinkers who have moulded the Indian thought since the beginning of the nineteenth century. He has approached the

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subject from a philosophical rather than a social or political standpoint. The definite end which the writer has set before himself is enquiring into the questions regarding the nature of Reality, of knowledge, and of ethical, aesthetic and spiritual experience in the larger context of Indian life and culture. Instead of dealing with specialised theories, the author calls upon the outstanding personalities and builds the story of Indian thought around their fundamental ideas. The author has achieved a great measure of success in his difficult task. The one attractive thing about the book is the unusual degree of frankness and impartiality with which the *milieu* of each thinker is faced. The style is at once lucid and sensitive.

The first chapter gives a background of modern Indian thought followed by chapters on Ram Mohan Roy, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Poet Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Dr S. Radhakrishnan, Ananda Coomaraswamy and Iqbal. Deep students of these personalities and their thought may not *always* feel satisfied with the author's line of approach or presentation. For instance, the views of the author that Vivekananda's reading was eclectic, his source (i.e., Sri Ramakrishna's discourses) was unsystematic, that he had no time to work out his ideas into a well-rounded theory (p. 87) hardly indicate depth. The statement that 'the psychological fact that wanderer's life cannot be conducive to steady thinking' (p. 87) cannot stand the test of reason; for it would bring within the orbit of its theory the life and work of Sri Sankara whose life was shorter than Vivekananda's. Further, how can we be sure that a sedantary existence is conducive to systematic thinking? It is a well-known fact that many great thinkers of the world were dynamic and giants in action.

One recurring thought of the author is the effect of Islamic influence on Indian thought. While it is necessary to have understanding and concord with different cultures, attempts at such synthesis must be based on valid proofs and not on hearsay evidence. There is no definite proof to say, 'But in point of fact Islamic influence had already made itself felt in South India as early as the eighth century' (p. 11). Sri Sankara's theory of absolute Brahman goes back to the doctrine of the Upanishads. While one can perceive the synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures in architecture, music, dance and other fine arts, Indian monotheism cannot be attributed to Islamic influence. Apart from the Upanishadic dictum of advaya-Brahman, the Gita (2 B.C.) has taught the doctrine of a single Supreme Person.

Anyhow the author has contributed a very able study of Indian thought, and in this respect his book possesses a wider interest.

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

ADVAITA VEDANTA: By M. K. Venkatarama Iyer. Publishers: Asia Publishing House, Bombay. Pages 213. Price Rs. 18.

Advaita Vedanta is an efficient presentation of the subject in terms of modern philosophy and science. The author is well conversant with the developments in both Indian and European philosophies and makes comparative studies with a view to show the excellence of the system he expounds.

After a scrutiny of the elements of Advaita in the Vedas, Upanishads and the Gita, the author discusses how far th Vedanta Sutras support this doctrine; he records the contribution of Gaudapada in his *Karika* and then proceeds to propound in detail the system as shaped and left by Acharya Shankara.

Prof. Iyer is accurate in his explanations of the various, intricate concepts in Shankara Vedanta, but we are afraid he is not equally fair to the other systems whether it is in presenting their doctrines or in examining their objections to the Advaita position. It is time we cease talking of the "superiority" of one system over another; there can be *specialities* among the many approaches to the Reality but hardly any superiorities and inferiorities.

However, an intelligent reader need not be handicapped on this account in profiting from the positive side of the book.

M. P. PANDIT

DESPOTISM: (A Pictorial History of Tyranny): By Dagobert D. Runes, Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York-16 Pp. 269. Price $ 12.50.

Dr Dagobert D. Runes is a well known name to the students of Philosophy. He is the author of several works like 'The Pictorial History of Philosophy', 'Dictionary of Philosophy' etc.

In this illustrated volume he presents the oppressions of kings and rulers — beginning from the medieval period upto the twentieth century all over the world — with whom mad passion for power and lust ruled the roost. He brings to the fore, how in man, who claims himself civilized, lurks the most barbaric tendencies ready at any time to let their fury manifest. The inhuman custom of slavery which still flourishes in some parts of the world is also drawn attention to. Atrocities committed in the name of religion depicted therein, makes one shudder. The collection of pictures for illustrations is done, as the author himself says, 'to present the reader with a cross-cut of the story of despotism. The pages of the book are almost a random offering: they could be multiplied a hundred times over with variations only in the detail and in geography'.

In publishing the volume the author 'fervently hopes these pages will bring out the macabre undertones in the Sirensones of dictatorship and make the still unbewitched tie themselves, like Ulysses, body and soul to the mast of their ship, sailing for freedom'.

SANSKRIT

YUGACHARYA-VIVEKANANDAH: By Swami Apurvananda. Translated in Sanskrit by Sri Gopalachandra Chakravarti. Pub. Vivekananda Centenary Celebrations Committee, Calcutta-14. Pp. 394. Price Rs. 3.00.

It was an excellent idea of the publishers to bring out this work in Sanskrit, a language which was held in the highest reverence by Swami Vivekananda and advocated by him as a sure means of elevating the general standards of the Indian peoples. The book could not be got ready in time for the Celebrations, but it is welcome all the same. Translated from the original in Bengali

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(by Swami Apurvananda), this biography is written in simple, chaste Sanskrit and covers all the phases of the Swami's life. A number of hymns by and on Swami Vivekananda are included in the appendix. The publication deserves wide circulation and could be prescribed for general reading in Sanskrit in the University courses.

M. P. PANDIT.

HINDI

PARAMAHAMSA CHARITA: Compiled by Swami Vijnanananda. Pub. Sri Ramakrishna Math and Sevashram, Allahabad. Pp. 200. Price Rs. 2.

This is perhaps the best and the most useful publication in Hindi — in its price range — on Sri Ramakrishna. We learn that this was the first book in Hindi to appear on the Saint and his teachings and the present issue is the fourth edition. It was compiled from a number of works in Bengali within 20 years of the Master's passing away and retains its freshness. Apart from a running account of his life, there are as many as 568 items in the section on the Teachings, arranged subject-wise, with anecdotes and quotations wherever possible. The book gives the Teaching in a nutshell and is of distinct value to every individual, whatever his avocation in life. A book that endears itself.

M. P. PANDIT.

MALAYALAM

SISUKKALUDE VIVEKANANDAN: Translated by Swami Mridananda. Pp. Cr. Quarto 56. Price Rs. 1.50.

KUTTIKALUDE VIVEKANANDAN: Translated by Swami Mridananda. Pp. 72. Price Rs. 0.50. Both books published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur.

These two small books written in a simple and charming style in Malayalam depict the life and message of Swami Vivekananda in brief. Both the books were originally written in Bengali, in connection with the Birth Centenary Celebration of Swami Vivekananda.

The first one is the Malayalam translation of Swami Viswasrayananda's book published in December 1963, and is intended for the children in the age group of five and six. The significance of Swami Vivekananda's birth in this world and the main incidents that took place in his life have been illustrated in this book in beautiful colour pictures. The author has done well in pointing out a number of pithy and significant sayings of Swamiji, on service or worship of the poor, the diseased and the downtrodden as God, on the cultivation of faith, love, fearlessness and sacrifice.

The second book is the Malayalam translation of Swami Niramayananda's book and is intended for the children in the age group of eight to ten. The author has given here a good account of Swami Vivekananda's life and message, portraying the main incidents in the sage's life. The author in the beginning has dealt with, in brief, the main tendency of the age in which Swamiji was born and ends by advice to the young minds to follow the inspiring teachings of Swami Vivekananda, viz. awakening the masses of India to their manliness, in loving and serving them, and striving for eternal peace and progress by combining work (karma) and meditation (dhyana), and knowledge (jnana) and devotion (bhakti).

These books will undoubtedly enable children and young boys to understand the life of Swami Vivekananda and imbibe his message, helping thereby to mould their personalities. The publishers have also done a signal service by pricing them moderately. The get-up is beautiful and should be appealing to the children.

P. M. BHASKARAN NAMBUDIRIPAD

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4

SRI RAMANAVAMI

A public meeting was held to celebrate Sri Ramanavami on the 18th April, 1965 at the Vivekananda Hall at 6 p.m. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the speaker and the audience and introduced the subject of the evening. Sri K. Chandrasekharan, M.A.,B.L., Advocate, Madras spoke on the 'Life and Teachings of Sri Ramachandra' for about an hour. It was a very interesting and informative speech. Sri N. Subramanian (Anna) proposed a vote of thanks.

SRI RAMANUJA JAYANTI

A public meeting was held at the Vivekananda Hall, on Sunday the 9th May, 1965 in connection with Sri Ramanuja Jayanti. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the gathering and introduced the subject of the evening. Swami Paramatmananda, Editor, *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam* spoke on the 'Life and Teachings of Sri Ramanuja' in English for an hour and a half giving a bird's eye view of Sri Ramanuja's life and teachings. The meeting started at 6 p.m. and came to a close at 7-30 p.m.

SRI SANKARA JAYANTI

A public meeting was held at the Vivekananda Hall, on the 16th May, 1965 in connection with Sri Sankara Jayanti. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the gathering and introduced the subject of the evening. Swami Abjananda, Manager, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, spoke in English on the life and teachings of Sri Sankara for about an hour and a half. Earlier there was some bhajan consisting mostly of the songs and hymns composed by Sri Sankara.

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

अत्यन्तं निर्जगद्व्योम यथा ते बुद्धिमाश्रितम्। तथैव सन्निराकाशं कुतो नाश्रयते मतिम् ॥ ४२ ॥

Atyantaṁ-nirjagat, absolute absence of the universe; *vyoma,* ether (*ākāśa*); *té,* your; *buddhiṁ,* intelligence; *yathā,* in what way; *āśritaṁ,* taken hold of; *tathaiva,* likewise; *nirākāśaṁ,* without *ākāśa; sat,* Being; *kutaḥ,* for what reason; *matiṁ,* (your) intelligence; *nāśrayaté,* does not grasp?

42. As your intelligence can comprehend the existence of ether when there is absolute absence of the universe (including the four elements) prior to creation, so, why can you not grasp the existence of Being alone without *ākāśa* (ether)?*

* The Naiyayikas depend only on inference to deny the permanence to the four elements. The Vedantin depends on the Sruti for his proof but does not discard reason. The Sruti says, तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशस्सम्भूतः। *Tait. Up.*, 2. 1., hence this question.

निर्जगद्व्योम दृष्टं चेत्प्रकाशतमसी विना। क्व दृष्टं किञ्च ते पक्षे न प्रत्यक्षं वियत्खलु ॥ ४३ ॥

Nirjagat, without the universe; *vyoma, ākāśa*; *dṛṣṭam-cet,* if seen; *prakāśa-tamasī-vina,* apart from light and darkness; *kva,* where; *dṛṣṭam,* (is it) seen? *Kiñca,* more over; *té,* (in) your; *pakṣé,* view; *viyat,* ether (*ākāśa*); *na-pratyakṣaṁ-khalu,* is unperceivable.

43. If ether (*ākāśa*), apart from light and darkness, is seen without the universe, where is it seen? (It is not seen). More over, in your view itself *ākāśa* is unperceivable!

Doubt: Well, in that case your "Being" is also not perceivable. Is it also then ephemeral? That is being answered in the next *sloka.*

सद्वस्तु शुद्धंत्वस्माभिर्निश्चित्तैरनुभूयते। तूष्णीं स्थितौ न शून्यत्वं शून्यबुद्धेश्च वर्जनात् ॥ ४४ ॥

Śuddhaṁ, pure; *sadvastu,* Being (Brahman); *tu,* but; *niścittai asmābhiḥ,* by us, whose minds have gone beyond the realm of knower and knowing;

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tūṣṇīm-sthitau, in the serene state; *anubhūyaté*, is experienced. *Śūnyabuddheśca*, the idea of void; *varjanāt*, being discarded; *śūnyatvaṁ*, void; *na*, will not result.

44. But the pure Being (Brahman) is experienced by us whose mind have soared beyond the distinctions of knower and knowing in that serene state (in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi). (In this state) the idea of void being discarded [1] there will not result any void.

[1] There is no experience of void in that state for a person who has attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi. For him whose mind is steady like the lamp in a windless place, the experience of Brahman, is as real as a myrobalan in the palm of his hand.

सद्बुद्धिरपि चेन्नास्ति मास्त्वस्य स्वप्रभत्वतः। निर्मनस्कत्वसाक्षित्वात्सन्मात्रं सुगमं नृणाम् ॥४५॥

Sadbuddhirapi, even the idea of reality; *nāsticet*, if, is not; *asya*, of this Reality; *svaprabhatvataḥ*, due to its self-effulgence; *mā-astu*, let there be not; *nirmanaskatva-sākṣitvāt*, being witness of an absorbed mind; *nṛṇāṁ*, for people; *sat-mātraṁ*, Reality alone; *sugamaṁ*, becomes easy of comprehension.

45. In that case, if it is said that there is not even the idea of Reality (in such an absorbed mind)? [1] This reality due to its self-effulgence is self-evident, so even if there be not any idea of Reality in that state, yet the fact that It is the witness of even the absorbed mind makes Reality only the more easy of comprehension by people.[2]

[1] In the Nirvikalpa state there is no *idea* of even the Being. But this does not become an impediment to or a handle for refutation of the existence of Being. For the *Sat* being self-effulgent illuminates even that state and is witness of it. The experience which is recalled after coming back to normal consciousness itself is the proof of the self-effulgence and existence of Being.

[2] This idea is enlarged in the next verse.

मनोजृम्भणराहित्ये यथा साक्षी निराकुलः। मायाजृम्भणतः पूर्वं सत्तथैव निराकुलम् ॥४६॥

Manojṛmbaṇa-rāhityé, when there is absence of flickerings of the mind; *yathā*, in what way; *sākṣī*, the indwelling Spirit; *nirākulaḥ*, without any modifications; *tathaiva*, similarly; *māyājṛmbaṇataḥ-pūrvaṁ*, before being enveloped by Maya; *sat*, Reality; *nirākulaṁ*, (was) without any change.

46. As the witness (the indwelling spirit) shines without any modifications (in its pristine purity) when the mind is free from its waverings, so too, the Being (Sat), prior to the manifestation of Maya, was without any modifications.

NOTE: What is the nature of Maya? That is being informed in the next verse.

निस्तत्वा कार्यगम्यास्य शक्तिर्मायाऽग्निशक्तिवत्। न हि शक्तिः क्वचित्कैश्चिद्बुध्यते कार्यतः पुरा ॥४७॥

Agniśaktivat, like the power of fire; *nistatvā*, without a separate existence; *kārya-gamyā*, can be comprehended from its effects; *asya*, of this (Reality); *śaktiḥ*, power; *māyā*, Māyā; *kāryataḥ-purā*, before the manifestation of effects; *śaktiḥ*, power; *kvacit*, at anytime; *kaiścit*, by any one; *na buddhyaté*, is not understood.

47. Like the power of fire which has no separate existence (except in fire) can be comprehended from its effects (viz. heat and light), similarly of this

(*Continued on page* 143)

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THE FOUR-FOLD BONDAGE AND RELEASE THEREFROM

THE average man's life on earth is a hopeless dependence on circumstances. He has several masters to serve: those under whom he works, those to whom he owes obligations, his own passions and lastly the ego. Among these the passions are the worst tyrants; they exact out of him all his energy and they will not leave him at that but would continue to torment him. Man's senses are at the root of all passions; the eyes hanker after beautiful objects, the ear after sweet sounds and so on and these senses are never satisfied. They appear to be pleased for a time, but there is no appeasing them. Without any compunction they repeat their demands. Their hunger is enormous. They make man work like a bond-slave, like the bullock that is tied to the yoke of the native oil mill. Tantalized by the wisp of grass that hangs before it, the bullock, in order to reach that coveted piece of food, grinds the mill day in and day out, but never gets the promised delicacy. Likewise, man expecting happiness grinds this mill of the world as a slave. But the pity of it is, that even when he becomes aware of his condition, aware that he is only made an instrument of, aware that he is himself being crushed in the mill, is unable to get out of it. He finds himself bound hand and foot, as it were. He finds that the flame of desires that he had himself kindled is burning him through and through. Then he cries out: Is there no way out? His real search begins then.

II

Let us try to understand the reaction of man, down the ages, to this fourfold bondage viz., to nature, to the relations and the like, to the senses and the ego. Man has tried in various ways to overcome external nature. He has come out of the cave and built up towns and cities to be free of the fear of the ferocious beasts and the whims of the ever-changing nature. He has overcome heat and cold by various methods. He has made nature yield its secrets bountifully. So, in a sense we can say that man has been successful in conquering outer nature. Yet a great question remains to be answered: How many have actually been benefited?

Perhaps a few countries may have been successful in breaking man's attachment to relatives, and the like. But whether that has improved man's nature in living peacefully with his neighbours, is a matter of dispute.

But when humanity is considered as a whole man's inner nature, i.e. the predominance of the senses and ego over man, has remained at, almost, the same level as what it was thousands of years ago. Civilization has not improved that nature to any appreciable extent. Now, consider what follows: a thousand years ago two nations would have fought out and done with any quarrel, within a few days or months. But today though hot war has gone under, it has been replaced by cold war. Nations are afraid to trust one another. Therefore each is trying to build up its defences to its utmost capacity, with the result that what revenue should normally have gone to build the economic structure of a nation goes into the war machinery. But there is no way out. No nation can, without danger to its very survival and territorial integrity, dare neglect to keep pace with others regarding armaments, especially of those of its neighbours. So this cold war goes on and on. Similar is the situation in every other field of man's contacts, family as well as society. So, where is the change? To consider, therefore, the question of change of nature in man taken on the collective plane is of little avail. We shall confine to man as an individual, for if in a society there were to arise a sufficient number of good individuals that society may ultimately be beneficial not only to itself but to the world as a whole.

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III

We have seen how much handicapped man is. Each individual, who seeks to master his lower nature, therefore has to fight his own battle. But what humanity has given him as a legacy is not soft clay but hard rock. From this hard rock he has to cut his image and according as his instruments, that is, his mind and inherent tendencies, are sharp and sound, and his efforts in this direction are ceaselessly continuous, regular and unwavering to that extent the image he will carve out, will also prove attractive and divine. But how to carve that image? In other words, how to attain that perfect mastery over our lower nature? There is a great difference here between the outer and inner worlds. In the outer world we may, if we have enough of wealth, employ the best sculptor or painter to do our job for us. But in the internal sphere, in the case of the mind, ordinarily, none can help, none can get you out of the morass. You have to find your own way out of the labyrinth. It is like the silkworm which builds its cocoon round itself. None can help it to break its house. But if it intends to come out, it may, in the form of a beautiful butterfly, do so. If man eagerly yearns and earnestly makes efforts, he can break this fourfold bondage. But the path is difficult and requires immense patience. It is like walking on the sharp edge of a razor. One should always be on the alert. That has been the experience of sages who have travelled the path.[1] For, in the case of the ordinary man, attachments insinuate themselves, in several ways and once they get hold of him they do not leave him easily. The story of Jadabharata, in the *Mahābhārata,* is aptly illustrative of this fact. Leaving his kingdom and wealth Bharata had retired to a forest to live in contemplation of God. There he came upon a young-one of a deer which was just then delivered by its mother on the bank of a stream and was being carried away on its current. Its mother had died in fright hearing the roar of some ferocious beast. Moved to pity Bharata rescued the deer and he thought it would be cruel to leave it in the forest with none to take care of. He reared it up with loving care. But when it grew the native urge in the animal took it into the forest; all the love the sage had showered on it could not hold it back. The sage was broken-hearted and roamed the forest calling the deer by its pet name, but it never returned. The thought of the deer however continued to haunt him and when he died his last uttered word was the name of the deer and his last thoughts were of it. Such is attachment. The king in spite of his right resolution could not restrain himself from being attached.

Now, it may be asked: How then to live in the world? Sri Ramakrishna has given us the prescription. He said to the householders: 'Live like a maid-servant in a rich man's house. She takes care of her master's children and calls them my Ram, my Shyam and treats them as her own but all the time she knows that her own children are there in her native village.' But this idea gets root only by long practice of discrimination and detachment. When one is able to detach oneself from the most dear thing without the least wrench at one's heart one can live like a master. The outer circumstances will then fail to produce any lasting impression on one's mind.

This discrimination is the sheet anchor of spiritual life. It is the faculty which makes man choose the right path and discard the vicious. The senses present one with a panorama of objects and sensations, which causes desires to arise. It is discriminatoin which says whether you can fulfil those desires without any detriment to your spiritual health. If you wisely submit to the dictation of discrimination you are safe, otherwise you involve yourself into insurmountable difficulties.

All sages have unequivocally declared that desire is at the root of all evil. The Buddha said that *tanha* (*trishna*) for things of the world was responsible for man's miseries. Sri

[1] क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया
दुर्गं पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति। *Katha. Up.* 3.14.

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Krishna says, 'This *kāma* (desire), this anger, is produced from the Rajoguna. It is a great appetite (*mahāshana*) and the most sinful (*mahāpāpmā*). Know it here (in this world) to be your enemy.'[2] Here desire and anger are bracketed together as one. For anger is desire obstructed. All other passions may be said to be the offsprings of this desire. As the *Gītā* observes, 'Man who thinks always about sense objects grows attached to them. From attachment desires arise, and when desires are obstructed anger springs up; anger clouds the mind. A darkened (infatuated) mind loses hold of memory (of what is good and what is evil). With loss of memory one fails to command the discriminating power and consequently loses one's hold on spiritual life.'[3] Herein we get a clue as to how man becomes increasingly a slave to his passions, and indirectly we get a hint as to what is to be avoided by a spiritual aspirant.

Another great drag on the mind of the present generation is its obsession about reason and logic and the related philosophy. Philosophy, as mere intellectual propositions, without their practice may be all right for a pedant, for a pedagogue and one who wants to earn name, fame and wealth. But as far as the religious life is concerned its use for man is very limited. A mere pandit cannot have peace for himself, not to speak of his being able to bestow it on others. His peace if at all he must find in what the common run of men also experience i.e. in sense pleasures. But that is exactly what a spiritual aspirant has to avoid and tries to break through. Idle is a man's hope, if he thinks that he can reach the summit of spiritual life by mere theorising about Reality without living a pure and unsullied life and doing assiduous and arduous practices. If any one wants to believe in a person who advocates living any sort of life but doing some intellectual gymnastics, about philosophy, he may well be sure that spiritually his ruin is certain and sealed. For even in the ordinary world, mankind does not trust a man devoid of integrity to be at the helm of affairs of a Government or even an establishment, what then to speak of spiritual life! Let us beware of such wolves in sheep's clothing who come to advise in this manner.

Having pointed out the pitfalls we shall see what is the way towards breaking these bonds and becoming master of ourselves. Man from his first appearance on earth has fought for freedom. Swami Vivekananda says that not only man's but the exertion of every being is to get back its freedom. Because in essence every being is that Brahman which is unfettered and eternal. All beings have somehow fallen from that state of freedom and so are struggling to get back to it. Two types of people tried in two different ways to obtain this freedom. The West concentrated their efforts in the external world whereas in the East, in India, our sages having explored the regions of outer life found that freedom was not to be sought there. They found another world inside themselves, unexplored, untouched, and vast. Commanding it, they realized, man could live like a master and eventually be free from this 'ring of return'.

But this word 'master' has a peculiar ring for an average man. It at once brings before his mind's eye the picture of man with many servants and vast wealth. But this is not the proper form of a master. For control over others may give us momentary satisfaction but cannot give us peace. Even dictators have a fall and while they rule they live in deadly fear of their lives. But to control one's body, one's senses and mind and turn it towards God is to become the real master, to be free from any fear. Man then cares not for anything. Nothing disturbs his peace. That was what our sages found out. And that mastery they said is to be achieved if anyone wants lasting peace and bliss.

Again, the mansion of man's body is constructed of a highly inflammable and explosive material. That is what he forgets. Śri

[2] काम एष क्रोध एष रजो गुण समुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्धेयनमिह वैरिणम् ॥
Bhagavad Gita, III. 37.

[3] *Ibid*. II. 62 & 63.

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Śankara observing man's pitiable plight says in his *Vivekacūḍamaṇi* : 'The deer, the elephant, the moth, the fish and the black-bee, everyone of these have died by their attachment to one or the other of the five senses, viz., sound etc. respectively. What then is in store for man who is attached to all the five senses!'[4] It is said that the deer is enamoured of music. Even though it is beset with danger the moment it hears the sweet sound of the flute it stops rooted to the spot and then is slowly, without its knowledge, drawn towards the sound. This is how, it is believed the hunters used to catch the deer. Similarly the other animals are drawn by their respective dominant senses. But man is a slave to all the five. How much then should not he be careful not to be entanlged or ensnared by them! There is no way of controlling the senses than not to indulge in them. Not to give them any rope, short or long. One should not give any scope for them to occupy one's mind. One should always be engaged either in good works, good thoughts or thought of God.

Sri Ramakrishna recommended taking the name of the Lord as the most efficient remedy for the malady of these passions. He further said, 'As you go to the east, the west is left behind. As man progresses towards God, his passions fall off from him.' Now to remember God, an Unknown Entity to a large section of mankind, is really a great problem. Most of the people have not seen Him, how then can they remember Him? Again, people can remember only things which they have seen and to which they are attached. How can they love God whom they have not seen? True, it is not possible all at once but on the other hand this physical attraction does not last; love in the world wanes and crumbles after a time. Things of the world are transient; today they are, tomorrow they are not. Nothing is permanent. Affliction and joy alternate. Love and hatred follow one another. Śri Śankara has an exquisite couplet describing the nature of human behaviour: 'As long as man is able to earn money, so long does the family respect him and regard him but when the body becomes feeble and decrepit, no one in the family asks about his welfare.'[5] And that is literally true in most of the cases. So, man must prepare himself for disillusionment if he is not to lose heart in the end. If he remembers these facts his outlook on life will change. He will then turn to a higher source of solace which neither fails him in his need nor makes any exacting demand. This constant remembrance of the Most High will enthuse man with new vigour to fight his lower nature; then the temptations will begin to have less and less effect on him.

There are, however, ups and downs in spiritual life also. It is not at all a smooth sailing. To tide over the rough weather man must have recourse to holy company. The company of the holy gives a fresh lease of life to his drooping spirits. From these holy men he comes to know that those phases of depression have to be gone through by every aspirant and are not insurmountable barriers, as they first appear to be. The practicant has to persevere until he reaches the goal. This is what the *Gita* calls *abhyāsa,* continuous practice. The *Gita* gives a high place for practice in religious life. It says that *abhyāsa* and *vairagya* (renunciation) are the two ways of controlling the mind.[6] Further, the *Gita* declares: 'The wayward mind is to be repeatedly brought under control though it may stray away from the Self from time to time.'[7] There is no other

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[4] शब्दादिभिः पञ्चभिरेव पञ्च
पञ्चत्वमापुः स्वगुणेन बद्धाः ।
कुरङ्ग मातङ्ग पतङ्ग मीन-
भृङ्गाः नरः पञ्चभिरञ्चितः किम् ॥
Vivekacudamani—76.

[5] यावद्वित्तोपार्जनसक्तः तावन्निजपरिवारोरक्तः ।
पश्चाज्जीवति जर्जरदेहे वार्तां पृच्छति कोऽपि न गेहे ।
Mohamudgara—5.

[6] अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ।
Bhagavad Gita, VI. 35.

[7] यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत ।
Ibid. VI. 23.

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way to subdue the mind than this. When the mind becomes tranquil, free from all impurities and is not disturbed by anything, then man becomes one with divinity. Then only he can be the master, not otherwise.

Purity of the mind, the *sine qua non* of spiritual life, can be achieved by several ways : (1) by living with a realized soul or holy men and serving them with sincerity, and devotion, (2) by good deeds, (3) by prayer, (4) by taking the name of the Lord, (5) by meditation, and (6) by yoga. Unless one's mind is pure the reflection of the Divine will not be perfect in man ; it will appear distorted. That is why man sees evil everywhere. When man becomes one with the Divine or sees the Lord, to use the devotee's phraseology, he gets rid of all bondages. This has been repeatedly stressed in the Upaniṣads. And when the bondages are broken man becomes master of himself.

And that is the most covetable state. We may move unconsciously towards it and make false steps in the attempt and retard our progress. But to move consciously and intentionally and deliberately, man must have a clear vision of his goal and the means that he is going to adopt to reach it and then without let or hindrance stick to his path firmly. If he is successful in his attempt, even while he is progressing on the path he will be peaceful and blissful, in spite of the heavy strain he will be subject to, even then he will feel that he is master, unfettered and free. In short, to live like a master one needs, not hoards of wealth, or progeny, or servants, but mastery over one's own mind and complete identification with God.

PANCADASĪ — (*Continued from page* 138)

(Reality) there is a power, called Māyā, which can be inferred from its effects such as *ākāśa*, and the like. But power of a body can not be understood by anyone at any time before its effects are noticed.

NOTE : Is Māyā different or non-different from Brahman that is being discussed and determined in the next two slokas.

सद्वस्तु सतः शक्तिर्नहि वह्नेः स्वशक्तिता। सद्विलक्षणतायां तु शक्तेः किं तत्त्वमुच्यताम् ॥४८॥

Sataḥ, of Reality (Brahman) ; *śaktiḥ*, power (Māyā) ; *na sadvastu*, is not a real entity ; *sva-śaktitā*, (becoming) one's own power ; *vahneḥ*, of fire ; *nahi*, has not (been seen) ; *śakteḥ*, to Māyā ; *sadvilakṣaṇatāyāṁ-tu*, in case of separate existence from Reality ; *kiṁ-tatvaṁ*, what is its nature ? *ucyatāṁ*, please tell.

48. Māyā, the power of Brahman, is not a real entity.[1] It has not been seen that the fire becomes its own power.[2] In case (it is presumed that) Māyā has got a separate existence from Reality, please describe what its nature is.

[1] If you say that Māyā is real you have to admit that it is non-different from Brahman. In that case you cannot call Māyā the power of Brahman, for being non-different it would be Brahman Itself. But the ultimate analysis regarding Brahman is that It is without activity, without change, without any flaw, eternal. So the power of Brahman though in Brahman is not non-different from it.

[2] It is believed that wearing a particular kind of gem on the person a man does not feel the heat of fire. If the fire had become its own power when it does not emit heat due to the above phenomenon, the fire also should be taken as non-existing which is however, not the case, as the person sees its form. Therefore, though the power is existing in the fire, it has no separate existence. Similarly it is with Māyā — that is the conclusion.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(Continued from the previous issue)

'AT ĀLWAR railway station a large gathering of aristocrats was waiting to receive him. But Swamiji without paying much attention to them quietly moved on to a corner of the platform where an ordinary man was looking eagerly at him. Swamiji, of course, went with the " bigs " but did not stay with any one of them. . . . One day an invitation came from a nobleman's house ; that day an old woman also came to invite him. He accepted the latter's request and told the gentleman that he would accept his invitation some other day. He told the old lady to prepare thick *chapatis* as she had done during his previous visit to the town (i.e. during his *parivrajaka* days). This old lady had given him food and shelter lovingly and reverently at that time. It was when he was residing at this old lady's place that the Raja of Ālwar came to know of the Swami and took him to his palace. This time also Swamiji remembered her goodness and gave her invitation preference over all others.'

At Khetri, in Rajputana, Lātu Maharaj talked with His Highness with such intelligence that the Raja could not understand that Lātu Maharaj was illiterate. On the other hand he was so much pleased with Lātu Maharaj's talks, that he praised him in his conversation with Swamiji. We heard about the incident from Krishnalal Maharaj in some detail which we give here : 'One day His Highness brought a globe and started showing various countries on it to Lātu Maharaj. Before this Lātu Maharaj had never seen a globe. His Highness was talking extensively about the globe. Noticing this Swamiji came to his co-disciple's help and gave such a turn to the conversation that the prince could not understand that Lātu Maharaj had no schooling.'

What is strange, however, is that although Lātu Maharaj was staying as an honoured guest in the palace, he, following the ancient custom of monks, never, even for a day, ate anything there. He said : 'Master used to say, " monks should not take meals in palaces." So I used to silently slip away and take my meals elsewhere.'

Lātu Maharaj had many such ideas which did not match well with those of his other *gurubhais*. That is why he could not stay at any centre of the Organisation ; he spent his whole life independently outside it.

From Khetri the party came to Jaipur, and from there Lātu Maharaj, accompanied by some of his *gurubhais*, returned to Calcutta.

CHAPTER XVII

Of the twelve years of Lātu Maharaj's life, after the passing away of the Master upto 1897, very few incidents are known to us. But those few are sufficient to give us an indication of the tremendous austerities he performed during the period. This is admitted by all his *gurubhais*. Swami Vivekananda said in later days : 'If we compare the surroundings out of which Lātu came with ours and his spiritual achievements, again, with ours we should have to admit that he is far superior to us. We are all born in noble families, are well educated and came to the Master with sharpened intellect ; Lātu was completely illiterate, joined first Ramababu and then the Master as a boy-servant. When meditation and prayer seemed monotonous we could remove our ennui by studies ; Lātu had no such alternative. He has had but one support throughout his life. The fact that he could keep his head in spite of all these adverse circumstances and had the supreme spiritual realization shows the inner

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strength of his personality and the infinite grace of the Master on him.'

In fact Lātu Maharaj had no other support except Sri Ramakrishna. Depending on him alone he passed his whole life. Ah ! Sri Ramakrishna was his all-in-all—not in words, but in deed, in inspiration, in aspiration, in the fulfilment of his life. So long as the Master was physically present Lātu followed his wishes implicitly. After his passing away also there was no change in his attitude. The Master remained the same lodestar of his life ; he could never accept anyone else as his guide even for a moment. How he understood the Master's guidance after his passing away is beyond our understanding, but he himself has told us many a time that it is he alone who has been guiding him, 'Else is it possible for an ignoramus like myself to undergo those hard austere practices during this period of my life ? What do I know of practices ? It is he who is taking me by the hand through all these *sādhanas.*' This absolute reliance on the Master is at the root of his wonderful success in life.

From what we have heard we can emphatically say that Lātu Maharaj's faith and reliance on Master's guidance was really 'absolute' in the fullest sense of the term. The very next day after the Master's passing away he appeared to Holy Mother and said, "Where have I gone ? Here I am standing before you. It is just like going from one room to another." Every syllable of the above was to Lātu Maharaj the very truth embodied. Whenever he faced a problem he looked to the Master and would never take a step except when the command was received from him. He would wait long—it seemed the whole life, if need be—bearing all hardship and sufferings, rather than take a decision himself or from others. It so happened sometimes that a whole year passed by and the problem remained unsolved. Once at Balarambabu's house, he said to us : 'You talk of dependence on the Lord ! If you call on Him for two consecutive days and do not get an answer you follow your own whims on the third day—so wise you think of yourselves ! What's the meaning of depending on Him ? It means to go by His orders. If you don't get any express order from Him you must desist from doing anything ; you must face all for that. If you can do that then only, it may be said that you have depended on Him, not otherwise. Brother Vivekananda used to say : "If I don't get Ram should I go to Shyam ? That is bad indeed. If our life is to go in vain let it be for Him." Just see the depth of his dedication to Him. He was ready to give away his life for his sake for nothing. One should hold on to Him like that. Then only will He show you the correct path.'

The devotee to whom Lātu Maharaj was narrating this said, "Why does not such a spirit of dedication come to us, Maharaj ?"

'It is because you place your intellect and egoism above Him. You are not prepared to wait for his orders. You lose patience in a minute,' replied Lātu Maharaj.

The above talk shows clearly with what patience Lātu Maharaj himself waited for the Master's commands.

We have narrated before that it was at the Cossipore garden that the world of *samādhi* opened up to Lātu Maharaj. It is a common belief that *sādhanas,* spiritual practices, culminate in *samādhi.* It is not the language of the *sādhakas.* It is true undoubtedly that every *sādhaka* aspires after entering into *samādhi* and every one stakes all for that. We have heard from Lātu Maharaj : 'Is *samādhi* a trifling thing ? After very great attempts at meditation, prayer, and all that, the human mind just gets a taste for Him. Then with harder endeavours people get a glimpse of His moods and splendour. Infinite are His moods, infinite are His splendours. But one has to transcend all that. In our attempts, to know the moods and splendours of the Lord, millions of births would pass yet nothing about Him could be understood. Still the Lord Himself is beyond all these. These moods and splendours are, so to say, His garments and ornaments ; He is far, far beyond all of them. And is it a matter of joke to go beyond them ; so sweet and wonderful are they that it is almost impossible

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for human beings to rise above them and pray for the revelation of His nature. If only His grace descends on man, if He so wills that he should see Him as He is in Himself, then He helps him in the dissolution of his mind and intellect, the two great obstacles in the path of the free play of intuition ; otherwise individual efforts to dissolve them are worse than useless. Effort indeed there should be, but only upto a certain stage ; beyond that divine grace is the only hope and support. When mind and intellect cease to play their parts the fortunate soul enters into *samādhi,* remember this. ! '

At this one of his hearers was struck dumb and cried out, 'What do you say, Maharaj ? We have heard that by dint of self-effort alone, through meditation and concentration of mind does a man reach *samādhi.*'

'What you have heard is not incorrect ; but that *samādhi* which is attained by concentration of mind is what Master used to call *chetana samādhi.* There the interplay of Divine moods and splendours occupies the field. He (Master) used to talk of another kind of *samādhi,* where mind is dissolved, egoity vanishes completely. I give you the truth ; that *samādhi* nobody can ever attain except by Divine grace.'

The devotee : 'Everybody says, Maharaj, practise and attain the goal.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Yes, goal is attained. But what do they know of *the* goal ? Most people take the experience of Divine moods and splendours as the goal ; and who would say that they are not. But they are not the last word. There is a "beyond" even of them, wondrous though they are. The second kind of *samādhi* is exactly that land beyond. These experiences of power and splendour endow the *sādhaka* with powers etc., and they themselves become the wonder of the people at large. But there they are stuck up—in splendour only ; the *jaḍa samādhi* brings the Lord Himself to him without meditation on anything. The coming of Lord Himself is a complete transformation of the *sādhaka*—the individuality is lost. That *samādhi,* the experience, cannot be expressed in words, not even a distant hint could be given. The Lord's powers, His splendours can be expressed in a way. But He Himself is not exhausted in them. Even these powers and splendours are infinite, they know no limitation. And yet all of them, even in their infinity, cannot express Him. In everything, He transcends all. Just as you have many qualities, you have many powers, you can hide them, you can express them if you like ; but you are surely not exhausted in them, your nature is not revealed in them ; your nature threads through them all and yet it is nowhere in them. It is possible for a *sādhaka* to understand a little of His powers and splendours but not an iota of Him, His nature. But when He Himself looks gracious on a *sādhaka* he knows Him mutely. Did not our Master say, "If a man, somehow or other, knows the master he can know his assets and properties too — the master reveals them to him" ? But is it easy to meet the master, to be acquainted with him ? First of all the door-keeper is to be pleased, then the servants and the butler, and perchance an intimate friend, who introduces him to the lord. The lord may grant him his prayer through his officers ; may call him to his presence ; may himself come out to meet him. Similar is the behaviour of the Overlord ; similar, therefore, should be our approach to Him. The Lord, if He is so gracious may come to the *sādhaka* Himself ; or He may call him to his presence ; may himself come out to meet expression, to the Vaishnava varieties of emancipation, viz., living in the same heaven with the Lord Himself, living in His Court etc. ?] Or He may send His officers (angels etc.) to him. All these depend upon His 'whims'. In all these matters what value do you set on your personal efforts ! Prayers to His servants and officers, this much only. Thus far do your spiritual *sādhanas* lead you, not a geometrical point beyond that. Then you will have to depend entirely on His grace—His grace alone. And this period in a *sādhaka's* life is extremely painful.'

The devotee : 'Why do you say, Maharaj, it is so painful ? When officers are pleased that

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means the prayer is granted—at least to some extent.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'There you are : "To some extent." That does not satisfy the *sādhaka*. The *goal* is not reached. Despair seizes the mind.'

The devotee : 'What do you say, Maharaj ? After such Herculean efforts if peace is not attained, that is depressing enough. All hopes are gone. We are undone ! Hopes dissolve before they rise in the heart.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Please remember one thing, contentment, satisfaction is a great obstacle in the path of the spiritual practicant. Its coming bars further progress. Can there be a limit to experiences in and of the Infinite ?'

Another devotee : 'That may be true, Maharaj ; but is it not a fact that all these hard and austere practices are for the attainment of peace ? And you say, that peace is a hindrance to further progress !'

Lātu Maharaj : 'True, all practices are for getting peace. (Stops a little and then resumes.) But peace is contentment which appears when all desires are gone ; and without desires what urges will lead us to further experiences ?'

The devotee : 'So, you mean to say, that there are experiences beyond peace ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Exactly. There are countless things beyond peace. But to have them, peace should be attained first. Do you know the nature of this peace ? A sense of plenitude, fullness in himself. Troubles, tribulations, worries will not affect the mind—that stage is peace. But when the door to higher spiritual experiences is flung open another kind of discontent fills the heart. This discontent is of a different type altogether, which I cannot explain to you. There the *sādhaka* cannot remain idle, yet he fully realizes the futility of personal efforts.'

One devotee : 'It is all an enigma, Maharaj, our understanding is crippled. Please explain it in our language.' Lātu Maharaj : 'To understand it, my boy, requires a little *sādhana*. Without austerities, deep contemplation, these things remain enigmatic. Your practices are little ; hence if I explain them a thousand times they will still remain to you as puzzling as ever.'

From the above conversation this much is clear to us that this *samādhi, jada samādhi,* does not depend on personal efforts and yet without them also it remains unattainable—the language is enigmatic, but the content is clear.

From this conversation we also get a key to unlock the mystery i.e. why Lātu Maharaj engaged himself in severe austerities after attaining *samādhi* at the Cossipore garden. But what he actually did, remains mostly unknown to us. Just a few glimpses are given below :

We have heard from the lips of Śaśi Maharaj : 'We had to call Lātu again and again back to normal consciousness and in a way force some food into his mouth. Many such days passed when all of us took our food, having called him again and again, but having got no response we placed his food in his room and came away; noon passed, evening came and went, at night when we entered the room, to call him for the night meal, we saw the day-meal remaining there as it was placed, only stale and stiff ; and Lātu lying down in the same straight posture as before, covered all over with a thick cotton chaddar. To force a little food down his throat we had to take recourse to many devices.'

Sarat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) once spoke to Mahendranath Datta: 'At night the rogue Leto does not sleep at all. Do you know, Mahim, during the first part of the night he simulates sleep, even snoring, and he keeps his rosary hidden with him. When others sleep he sits up and starts counting beads. One night I heard the ticking of beads and thought a mouse might have entered the room. When I gave a rap it stopped. A little after the ticks began again. It happened many times. A doubt, arose in my mind—it may not be a mouse. Next night I remained awake and watchful. The moment I heard the first tick I struck a match and found the rogue Leto sitting up and counting beads; then I said with a laugh, "You rogue, you mean to cheat us:

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we shall be sleeping and you will be counting beads. That won't do. . . ."'

The above two incidents occurred at Baranagore. At Ālambazar it was not different either. Here is Sudhir Maharaj's (Swami Śuddhananda's) testimony: 'That was my first visit to Ālambazar (Math). I saw one lying straight covering his whole body, from head to foot, with a cotton sheet, and two others were pulling him hard. That being my first visit, I was taken aback. I did not care to inquire into its reason. Long after I asked him one day the reason for the strange behaviour. He said, "I thought, I would stop feeding the rogue of a body; so I was lying like that".'

The above three incidents are typical of his attitude towards his life. For six long years he did not give up this attitude. Forgetting food and sleep he performed austerities. It is not merely the foregoing of physical essentials that made his spiritual practices more austere and severe — they are but negative virtues — but their positive aspect viz., meditation and japam without any break, which were really astounding. Mahendrababu (Datta) is on record: 'Then Lātu Maharaj's attitude was: "Total wiping himself off or reaching out to fullest plenitude"; nothing in between would satisfy him. From his eyes, from his bearing, from every part of his body was blazing forth this determination. . . . There was a sort of spiritual competition among these co-disciples.'

In later days Lātu Maharaj himself admitted, 'Once it came to me that I must be as great as brother Vivekananda. Little did I then understand how far ahead of me he was. But I concentrated all my energy to the realization of this end. What did I see? The more I approached him the farther ahead he appeared to be. Once it seemed I had almost overtaken him. But there also it proved to be a delusion. He was going ahead at full speed. Of what avail were my paltry efforts? Was it a matter of personal efforts? It was the region of the Lord's grace! I can no more double my endeavour, I have employed my full speed. Brother Vivekananda was not to stop like the hare of the story. How can the question of overtaking come?'

Hearing this a devotee naively said, 'But, Maharaj, at the end of *sādhana* all become equal, reaching as they do the same goal?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'How foolish! That can never be.'

The devotee: 'Why not, Maharaj? There's the goal, the end of the race. When you reach it, the achievement there is the same for all.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'What a naivity; Is there an end to *sādhana*? or to powers or splendours? or a limitation to Atman? It is all a race in infinity! Because of this unending process nobody can say "Brahman is this or even like this".'

One day at Balarambabu's house Biharibabu asked him, 'You repeat it often: there is no end to *sādhana* nor to powers and splendours, or to experiences; or limitations to Ātman. But the scriptures talk of *mukti*. What is that then?'

What Lātu Maharaj said in answer to this we extensively quote below: 'To you mukti means freedom from bondage. But in *sādhana* it means becoming, merging. Just as the waters of a river merge themselves in those of the ocean, so the individual *ātman* merges itself in the ocean of the Paramātman. Or in other words the *sādhaka* loses himself completely in the latter. But do you think there the matter ends?'

(To be continued)

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GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE ACCORDING TO JNANA YOGA

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THE highest goal of human life has been considered by the Jnana Yogins as total absorption into the Infinite Substance. We are warned that there is danger as long as any consciousness of separateness from that ultimate Reality exists. There is always cause for apprehension if there are two existences. If God and I are separate and distinct there could be union and separation, and there could be so many moods flowing from one to the other. Furthermore, there is time, space and causation and as long as there are these three there is the possibility of transformation and change. So where is security, peace and perfection, in the presence of two?

It certainly is a wonderful state to remain concentrated and absorbed in the love of God, to enjoy the presence of the divine Being, but from the viewpoint of security you cannot say that one is absolutely " safe ". Complete safety is attained when the worshipper and the worshipped, the human soul and the Divine Existence, become one and identical. We are not considering the question from the viewpoint of enjoyment; for if we ask for that we must stay in the dualistic state. But enjoyment is not always to be sought. A time will come when you are concerned more about security than mere enjoyment and there is no security, no rest, until one has transcended all consciousness of duality. It is true of course that by going through the state of enjoyment of God, one can eventually attain the state of Oneness. Man may start as a dualist adoring His Divinity, loving his God with his body, mind and soul, and enjoying the love of God showered upon him, but a time must come, in the course of the unfoldment of that soul, when he will attain that state of unity.

Now that unity, which is the goal of Jnana Yoga, if it is unity at all, cannot be attained. Unity really cannot be attained. It must either exist all the time or it can never be found. If I am not one and the same with the divine Principle now, at this present moment, I cannot be so, say, two years from now. If I am not one and identical with that Principle at this present spot, travelling throughout the universe I shall never be able to reach a spot where I shall be able to become one with It. So, if we admit this proposition at all, that finally we have to attain our unity with the divine Principle, we must admit that we are one with it now. No separation ever took place. It is only our false conception regarding our self that has created this monstrous blunder that we think we are separated from the divine Substance. As a result of ignorance we are compelled to think that that divine Perfection is far, far away from us. When ignorance is removed we find that all the time, always, under all circumstances, we have been one and the same with It.

Herein comes the question of removing the obstacles. In other words, purification of the consciousness. Our consciousness is heavily burdened with impurities. As soon as those impurities clinging to the surface of the consciousness are eliminated, the inner lustre, the perfection, shines without hindrance. If we can successfully eliminate the impurities clinging to this so-called individual consciousness, this consciousness which I am calling " mine ", calling finite and imperfect, will attain the state of absolute Consciousness. This truth must be very well assimilated. Look within and you will find that you are conscious of the existence of Something within, a power, a light, a force, (call it by any name), but of course we are reluctant to admit that that power within us is universal, is omnipotent. And the reason for that reluctancy is that the self has accumulated dust and dirt, as the result of which its inner, Absolute nature has been completely hidden. It

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is the same Self, appearing as a finite imperfect entity. This consciousness of ours which we sometimes call our mind, our intelligence,—this is the divine Substance. You do not have to go anywhere to seek it. This is one hundred per cent divine. We have to eliminate the accumulated imperfections.

A beautiful illustration has been given—of the purification of gold. Gold intrinsically is pure and brilliant, but when it is mixed with other substances it may appear devoid of lustre ; it may look like an ordinary stone. In order to make gold shine in its own purity we must know the process of purifying it. This substance which we are handling every day—our inner consciousness—is like a pure, precious metal. What we have to do is to eliminate the impurities from the ore.

By analysing this " ore " of our consciousness expert " minerologists " have come to the conclusion that there are three things very impure, that cling to it. One is of a very gross nature. It is not compounded with the ore but it clings to it as a coating, just an external coating. To get rid of it you have to put the " ore " on the " anvil " and hammer it, that cleanses it. There are other types of impurities that cannot be eliminated by the hammering method, because these impurities have almost formed a chemical compound. A strong " chemical " has to be used to eliminate them. Then a very subtle form of impurity still persists. That can only be eliminated by putting it into the " fire ". When it comes out of the " fire " it comes out as pure " gold ".

We are all going through these processes, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly. I do not believe that the path to perfection is strewn with petals of roses. It is beset with many difficulties. That is why, perhaps, we find in all forms of religious and philosophical thought, suffering has been glorified, extolled. But mere suffering as suffering is no glory ! When suffering becomes a conscious process of purification then it is no more suffering. Only by going through that state of suffering can one attain perfection, but mere suffering will not do. If that were so all the homeless, suffering, starving people would be the holiest. We cannot say either that those who have lived in luxury are nearer perfection. We have to go through that conscious process of purification. No soul can enter into the ' kingdom of heaven ' without it. Gradually, going through that process of purification this consciousness gets rid of the different layers of imperfections, but even at the last stage of this process it has some defect clinging to it. Although it might appear to be absolutely pure and clear, if it retains the individual character, if it is still a unit by itself, it might be blessed but it is not safe. Again a whirlwind might overcome it and throw it again into a dust bin, because it is not yet the All. Unless and until it has become the All it is not safe.

That state of being the All has been called the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, a state where there is no duality of any kind. Even if your consciousness which is now full of grief and complaints becomes pure and abounds in happiness and power, that consciousness will still be the consciousness of an individual, in spite of the possession of those qualities. You will think : ' My consciousness is full of bliss of peace.' It is still an individual consciousness, do not think that what has been attained will last forever. Absolute security is attained by non-dualistic consciousness. If your ideal is one of enjoyment you will hate the thought of the non-dualistic state. You will repeat with the Bhakta : ' I do not want to *be* sugar ; I want to *eat* sugar.' All right go ahead, eat ' sugar ', but you might get a stomach-ache ! You are not secure. Security is attained by *being* sugar.

That state is extolled in the following verses. You will find that Shankaracharya is encouraging us not to stop until that final goal of Nirvikalpa Samadhi has been attained. Totally merge into that substance, into that infinite ocean of Sat-Chit-Anandam. There is no compromise ; that is the goal. There this container, our consciousness, will melt and will not exist any more, and there will not be any tendency to come back.

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If that state were suddenly given to us most of us would resist it with all the force at our command. I am sure many of you have studied the life of Swami Vivekananda. Ramakrishna, by a mere touch, brought that condition of Nirvikalpa Samadhi to Swami Vivekananda when he was a young boy — and how he resisted! He has described what happened then in words something like this: 'There was a whirlpool that was moving the entire universe. I could see the heavens, the planets, being merged. My body was being disintegrated, and mother, family and friends had vanished.' And he cried out: 'What are you doing to me?'

Those who have gone into that Nirvikalpa state rarely come back. In history there is record of only a few who have done so. Shiva, for instance, and Shukadev (he could never grow old, he remained as a little boy because he touched that Nirvikalpa state). Of course, Ramakrishna could go at will into that state again and again and come back to normal consciousness. We have ample proof of that.

However, we must reconcile ourselves that the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, total absorption is the goal. Do not think that you do not believe in a heaven. You may not believe in a hell, for we can only think in terms of sense enjoyment. One has to convince oneself that there is no sense enjoyment which is lasting. Say: 'I only want to be what I am, I want to be absorbed in it.' There is suffering in heaven, perhaps, and quarrels and jealousies. In the realm of phenomena there is always suffering. To make up one's mind to attain that state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi is to reject any subject-object consciousness. That state has been described in terms of matter because we cannot talk in any other language. A poet says: 'If ten-thousand suns could shed their light in at one moment it would appear weak before the glory of that Knowledge; if twenty-million moons could shed their brilliance in one volume, that would not compare with the radiance of that Knowledge.'

(Question): 'In that ocean of infinite bliss there would be no forms. Individual enjoyment would not exist there, how could we enjoy it?' (Swami): 'The assurance has been given that nothing can be missed there. It is the sum-total of all the bliss you can think of. Suppose you like to swim in a pool of water and you enjoy drinking from another, floating a boat in another—this gives you individual happiness. Now suppose one vast sheet of water includes all these pools which you enjoy in different ways, nothing is excluded from it. Nothing will be missed in that Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The individual enjoyment that we derive from the senses is just a little particle, but in that state is contained the sum-total of everything. So there is no reason to get discouraged.'

However, to continue, this consciousness of ours just now, no matter how it appears, is the Substance besides which ten-million suns and millions of moons look pale. We have to get rid of certain impurities that are clinging to it. So let us start with the hammering, rubbing, scrubbing and the fire-test processes with understanding and happiness, conscious that in going through these stages we are purifying our 'gold.' It is not vainglorification of suffering. It is not self-torture, which is a complex, but it is, perhaps, self-analysis. Understand the possibility of deriving benefit from all sorts of conditions you may find yourself in.

> As gold purified by thorough heating in the fire gives up its impurities and attains its own lustre, so the mind, through meditation gives up its impurities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and attains to the reality of Brahman.
>
> — *Vivekachudamani*, 361.

This mind, now, is Brahman, but it has been covered up by three layers of impurities. The innermost is Sāttvic, the next Rājasic and the outermost is Tāmasic. We get rid of Tamas by the hammering method, of Rajas by scrubbing, and of Sattva by applying the fire of discrimination and meditation.

'Desires are like knots.' Even the desire to see God is a knot which has to be cut. You remember when Sri Ramakrishna was going through the monistic practices with his Guru,

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Totapuri, he could eliminate all conceptions from his consciousness except the form of his beloved God, Kali, and Totapuri picked up a piece of broken glass and pressed it between his eyebrows and said : 'Cut it with that.'

Again, 'When the seeds of Karma have been fried in the pan of Nirvikalpa you cannot sow them and get a harvest again,' so said Ramakrishna. Even the worship of God is Karma, the result of Karma.

And then when 'all work is at an end' one gets absorbed in that Substance which is one's own real nature. It cannot be described.

Now, hearing, reflection, assimilation and meditation are the processes of changing but they are little drops in the bucket compared with Nirvikalpa Samadhi. A child plays housekeeping, but what is that compared with real housekeeping? Reflection is Manana. It is superior to hearing, Shravana. When you engage yourself in Manana it is a hundred times superior to Shravana. Meditation, Nididhyāsana, is a hundred thousand times superior to Manana, but Nirvikalpa Samadhi is 'simply infinite in its results'.

We may well remember here the trumpet call of Swami Vivekananda : 'Awake, arise and stop not till the goal is reached.'

LEAD KINDLY LIGHT

PRONOTI DEVI

SISTER NIVEDITA writes in her book *The Master as I Saw Him,* 'Our Master, at any rate, regarded the order to which he belonged as one whose lot was cast for all time with the cause of woman and the people. This was the cry that rose to his lips instinctively, when he dictated to the phonograph in America, the message that he would send to the Raja of Khetri. It was the one thought, too, with which he would turn to the disciple at his side, whenever he felt himself nearer than usual to death, in a foreign country, alone, "Never forget!" he would then say, "the word is, 'Woman and the People'!"'

We have to admit that modern Indian women have complete freedom and a status in society equal to men. But along with this expansion we become aware of a new obligation that presents itself to our minds. With all her education and freedom every Indian woman realizes that there is a lack of adjustment between the various elements in the world of her thought, there is a contradiction between her ideals, institutions and habits. This sense of incompleteness suggests the need of a new ideal. As this is a period of transition it is but natural that such a problem should arise. That today we have to face this crisis is not the problem; our problem is how to solve it? The education which we receive at our universities instead of solving the problem brings in many new problems of its own. It is not suggested that university education is of no value. On the contrary this education has made us conscious of ourselves as individuals and also of the fact that there should be a conscious striving towards an ideal, where we will be able to harmonize the various aspects of our life.

There is no dearth of criticism which the modern woman has to face. But the critics fail to realize that all this has come as a reaction to the oppression they had to suffer at the hands of men. To each and every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction; that is the law of nature. In the joy of their recently earned freedom they feel like breaking all ties with the ancient. But this only proves that the same Self resides in all and bondage of any type is unbearable to It. In the 19th century our men were lured by the western civilization but our women were the preservers of their culture and heritage. Today, we find to our great sorrow, our women are also being lured

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by the charms of the material civilization. Today we are ready, nay, eager to fall into the snares of materialism. We have given up the old ideals but their place has not been replaced yet by the new ones. If in olden days the atmosphere of India was vitiated by the tears of the widow, now the sighs of unmarried or divorced, frustrated career girls are mixed with the murmur of the breeze that blows throughout India. The widow had an assurance of peace, if she could take up the life of a Brahmacharini, as prescribed by the society, and strive for the highest ideal of human life, that is God-realization through self-sacrifice. But that assurance is not there for the present-day woman. She is taught to look down upon those ideals as superstitious and she tries to seek her fulfilment in the enjoyment of the senses, which only makes her conscious of her own sorrows and blind to the suffering of others. It seems that in our mad chase after pleasure, we have forgotten the maxim that the more we run after pleasure the less we get of it.

In trying to solve this problem we must not forget to pay heed to Swamiji's words of caution : 'Any attempt to modernise our women, if it tries to take our women away from that ideal of Sita, is immediately a failure, as we see every day. The women of India must grow and develop in the foot-prints of Sita, and that is the only way.'

He presents to us a beautiful picture of Sita and the ideal of Indian womanhood, when he writes, 'Sita is the name in India for everything that is good, pure and holy; everything that in woman we call womanly. If a priest has to bless a woman he says, "Be Sita!" If he blesses a child, he says, "Be Sita!" They are all children of Sita, and are struggling to be Sita, the patient, the all-suffering, the ever-faithful, the ever-pure wife. Through all this suffering she experiences, there is not one harsh word against Rama. She takes it as her own duty, and performs her own part in it. Think of the terrible injustice of her being exiled to the forest ! But Sita knows no bitterness. That is again, the Indian ideal.'

A question may be raised here as to the utility of going back to ancient ideals. Why, instead of the great women scientists, educationists and social workers of modern times are we asked to take up Sita as our ideal? But then we must not forget the words of Swamiji, '. . . . . everyone born into this world has a bent, a direction towards which he must go, through which he must live, and what is true of the individual is equally true of the race. Each race has to make its own result, to fulfil its own mission . . . . India's gift to the world is the light spiritual.'

A doubt arises in our mind as to the possibility of leading such a life, specially when it is felt that the modern woman has to shoulder more responsibilities than her sisters of earlier times. Sita, in spite of all her glory does not seem to us to be made of flesh and blood. If we study the life of the Holy Mother (Sri Sarada Devi) not only this doubt is silenced, but once more we are convinced of the statement that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. Of her, Sister Nivedita writes: 'To me it has always appeared that she is Sri Ramakrishna's final word as to the ideal of Indian womanhood. But is she the last of an old order, or the beginning of a new? In her one sees realized that wisdom and sweetness to which the simplest of women may attain. And yet to myself the stateliness of her courtesy and her great open-mind are almost as wonderful as her sainthood.'

An ordinary everyday woman does not aspire to be a saint. She wants to live her life successfully, that is if we may put it, she wants to die without any regrets. She knows fate will stand in the way of fulfilment of many of her desires, but then who has all her desires fulfilled? What she wants is purity. With purity will come courage and the patience to pursue an ideal, and above all she needs the capacity to love. There is much truth in the proverb 'the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world'. If India is to be great her sons must have mothers worth the name.

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It is not possible for us to realize the full significance of the Holy Mother's life. For in order to understand a saint you must yourself be a saint. But we can trace some of the basic qualities mentioned above that are needed for a purposive and fruitful life in her character and conduct, which bring to us the message of hope that all is not lost; that there is time yet to regain what we have lost, and develop those qualities in us.

It will not be out of place if a few instances from Holy Mother's life are related here. When she came to Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar, she was asked by him whether she wanted to drag him to worldly life. To this she had boldly replied that she had not come to drag him down but to help him in his religious path. Sri Ramakrishna in later times admitted to his disciples that the Holy Mother's purity helped him a great deal in his religious life. Had she been of a different temperament, he said, he was doubtful whether he could keep his self control. Even if we leave apart the question of their divinity, the relation between them shows that marriage is a sanctimonious act, not a way meant only to fulfil carnal desires. Who can pity her for her virginhood in her married life? What woman can claim that she has more attentions paid to her by her husband? The tribute which Sri Ramakrishna paid to her when he worshipped her as the symbol of the Mother of the Universe is unique in the history of mankind.

The purity and gentleness of her character gave her courage. The type of courage which anyone with a tinge of impurity will not even be able to conceive of. We get a glimpse of this quality in her, when she—left alone in the dacoit-infested wilderness of Telōbhelo and Kaikala at nightfall—instantly addressed the fierce-looking man approaching her with a club as father and sought his protection. The wife of the man who also had accompanied him impressed by the comport of the Holy Mother consoled her and protected her the whole night as if she were their own daughter. Here we can imagine what strength of mind was hidden behind her gentle maternal nature.

Language fails to describe her all-embracing love. Her love for all made her decline to notice others' faults. This love again, made her sympathise and feel one with the poor woman who had lost her son. Eye-witnesses tell us that the way both of them wept, made it difficult to decide who was the real mother of the boy who had passed away. Holy Mother herself said that Sri Ramakrishna left her behind to manifest the motherhood of God to the world. Many a time she discarded social conventions not with a zeal for reform, but with her real mother-heart to let her children feel that she their mother was beyond all conventions and was ready to acknowledge them as her own. Her staying in the same house with Sister Nivedita and cleaning the place where a Mohammedan dacoit had taken his food are two of the many instances when her maternal nature went beyond social conventions. Thus we find in her a charming blend of the qualities of Sita and the power to adjust herself with the changing times.

So when today, after a long period of suppression we, Indian women, have come to gain our freedom, and have understood our share of responsibility in the building up of our nation, let us not forget the Holy Mother, who is the torch-bearer in our march towards a higher life. Let us all pray to her with a single mind to 'lead kindly light'.

Nothing can happen without the will of God. Not even a straw can move. When a man passes into a favourable time, he gets the desire to contemplate on God. It is God alone who expresses His will through the actions of man.

— HOLY MOTHER.

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MADHU SUDAN SARASWATI : THE GREAT ADVAITA SCHOLAR

ANIMA SEN GUPTA

MADHU SUDAN SARASWATI, the great Advaita scholar is the author of a booklet entitled *Advaita Ratna Rakṣaṇam* which has received attention of a very limited section of oriental scholars. In this important work, Madhu Sudan Saraswati made a special attempt to establish non-dualism of Saṁkara after refuting the objections raised against Advaitavada by the supporters of the *bhedasat vada*. He refers to a number of *śruti* and *smṛti* texts showing how these are interpreted by the supporters of the *bhedasat vada*. Madhu Sudan has also made an attempt to show the defects inherent in the interpretations of the opponent group thereby proving that all *śruti* texts should be interpreted from the Advaita point of view.

In an article published in "Darshan International" of Moradabad in its "Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Souvenir Volume", I made an attempt to present the views of Madhu Sudan Saraswati with particular reference to his views expressed in "*śrutīnām bhedaparatva bhangaḥ*" (*Advaita ratna rakṣaṇam*).

In this article I shall make an attempt to present his views with reference to his *sūtra* No. 4 i.e. *atha sarva buddhiviṣaya bhangaḥ*.

It is generally held against the Advaita Vedānta that the non-dual scriptural texts which are admitted by the Advaita-school as evidence for the declaration of the Highest Being as differenceless, cannot be accepted in that manner; because the sources of knowledge such as perception etc. which prove difference will then be opposed to these *śruti*-texts.

Madhu Sudan Saraswati in his sūtra "*atha sarva buddhibheda viṣaya bhangaḥ*" points out that this view of the realistic school is unsound. This is because perception can never reveal difference.

INCAPACITY OF THE PERCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE TO REVEAL DIFFERENCE :

Perception is generally divided into two forms—indeterminate *(nirvikalpaka)* and determinate (*savikalpaka*). The Advaita Vedānta holds that *nirvikalpa pratyakṣa* is incapable of revealing difference since it manifests only the differenceless pure being. Even *savikalpaka* perception which grasps a qualified object does not, in the Advaita opinion, reveal difference of one qualified object from another. When the jar is perceived, the determinative intellect or the *savikalpaka* buddhi only assumes the form of "this is jar", "this is cloth" etc. In other words in the determinate knowledge of the jar, the things present before the perceiver are, at the very first moment, the jar, jarness and the relation between the jar and the jarness etc. It is the *vaiśiṣṭya* in the form of the relation between the jar and the jarness which is grasped only in the full-fledged determinate knowledge of the subsequent moment and there is no other thing present that can be admitted as difference.

It cannot be said that the difference is an ingredient of *vaiśiṣṭya* because we find that *bedha* and *vaiśiṣṭya* are always mentioned separately by different words. The realists may object by saying that *vaiśiṣṭya* should not be supposed as an extra-thing, different from difference, as in that case, the law of parsimony will be violated. *Vaiśiṣṭya* is to be regarded as a form of difference because it is the *vaiśiṣṭya* of the jar that differentiates the jar from all other things which are not jars. This is what is known also as *atadvyāvṛtti*. So the difference which is of the form of *ananyābhāva* is the same as *vaiśiṣṭya*. Hence, the knowledge of *vaiśiṣṭya* is the knowledge of

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difference. Udayanācārya has said : *atadvyāvṛtti vaiśiṣṭyamiti.* Here Madhu Sudan Saraswati raises a question : how does knowledge of *vaiśiṣṭya* in the form of *atadvyāvṛtti* arise in the case of the cognition of this jar, arising just after the passing away of the *nirvikalpaka* stage ? He further assumes that the realistic school will perhaps try to answer his question by saying that just as prior to the knowledge of the qualified object in the *savikalpaka* stage, one has to have hypothetical knowledge of *viśeṣaṇa,* and also the recollection of the *saṁjñā,* in the same manner prior to the cognition of *vaiśiṣṭya* in the *savikalpaka* stage, recollection of *vaiśiṣṭya* has to be supposed. This possible answer of the realists, however, is not acceptable to Madhu Sudan Saraswati because *vaśiṣṭya,* in the Advaita view, must be something over and above the noun, adjective and their relation. Even in the *savikalpaka* stage (as we have seen) the knowledge of the first moment, is different from the knowledge of the second moment. In the first moment, we have the knowledge of stick, man and the relation, whereas in the second moment, we have the knowledge of a man with a stick (Daṇḍī puruṣa). There is difference between cognitions of these two moments. There is something more in the second cognition (because *daṇḍa* is cognized as being related to puruṣa as an attribute) than in the first. This "something more" is termed as *vaiśiṣṭya.* If we do not hold that there is something more in the second moment than there is in the first, then the knowledge of the first moment too will be the knowledge of a qualified object.

Since it is impossible to explain *savikalpaka* cognitions of the two moments without considering *vaiśiṣṭya* as something additional besides noun, adjective and relation and also as merging only in the second moment, the question of violating the law of parsimony does not arise at all.

In the opinion of Madhu Sudan Saraswati, *vaiśiṣṭya* cannot be regarded as a form of *atadvyāvṛtti* even from the point of view of the realistic *Nyāya* school. This is because unless there is the knowledge of non-blue, there cannot be knowledge of the difference from non-blue (i.e. *anīla-vyāvṛtti* or *anīla-bheda*) in the case of the cognition of a blue lotus. If it is urged by the realists that here the memory of non-blue will serve the purpose, then too, the situation will not improve; because memory of non-blue is not possible unless there is prior knowledge of blue. How does the knowledge of blue arise in the first stage ? Moreover, everything besides blue is included in non-blue and so it is not possible for any human being to have a full knowledge of the non-blue in one life.

We may ask what actually is meant by *anīla-vyāvṛtti ?* Does it mean difference from blue ? Or does it mean some positive thing that can be designated as *anīla ?* If it is the former, then there will be the fallacy of mutual dependence. Blue is to be known as something different from non-blue and non-blue is to be known as something different from blue. Then how are we to know these two mutually dependent objects ? If we accept the latter alternative (i.e. non-blue referring to something positive) then the knowledge of that positive thing is occurring without the knowledge of difference *(vyāvṛtti jñāna).* If this is so, then we can very well say that the knowledge of blue too, arises without the knowledge of *vyāvṛtti.* Truly speaking, when we cognize the cow, our cognition takes the form of "cow" only and there is no knowledge of the negation of non-cow. *Gotva-vaiśiṣṭya* which is revealed in the awareness of the cow is positive and not negative. It is, therefore, not proper to explain cowness in terms of *agau-vyāvṛtti.* Again, if cowness is the same as *agau-vyāvṛtti,* then cowness as a universal will not be established and this will be prejudicial to the philosophical position of the realistic school.

The author of *Tattvacintāmani* has said that it is only after one is aware of *daṇḍī puruṣa,* that he comes to cognize *adaṇḍa-vyāvṛtti* (negation of non-stick) in the *daṇḍī puruṣa.* Had the first moment of *savikalpaka* knowledge been the revealer of *vyāvṛtti,* the word *anantara* would not have been used.

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COMMENTS

If we analyse critically the perceptual positions of the *Nyāya* and the Advaita schools in the light of what has been stated by Madhu Sudan Saraswati in this particular *sūtra,* we find that the two positions differ from each other in the following manner :

According to Advaita Vedānta, the first moment of the determinate knowledge reveals noun, adjective, relation etc. in unrelated units. It is only in the second moment that the knowledge of the thing (noun) as qualified by the attribute (*vaiśiṣṭyāvagāhi*) arises. So the knowledge of *vaiśiṣṭya* arises in the second moment of the determinate knowledge. According to the Nyāya school, the noun, adjective, relation etc. are cognized as unrelated units in the indeterminate knowledge which resembles to a great extent the first moment of the determinate knowledge of the Advaita vedānta. The stage in which the substantive-adjective relation is established is known as the *savikalpaka* or the determinate stage by the Nyāya-school. Now this cognition of substantive-adjective relation is what is necessary for the knowledge of difference. Just as knowledge of two is at least necessary for having combination or relation between things (because *sva* cannot be relative to *sva*), in the same manner cognition of at least two things is necessary for having the knowledge of difference (*Sva* cannot be differentiated from *sva*). After the arousal of this cognition, the knowledge of difference arises easily, provided there is no *pratibandhaka* to prevent it. Now the positions of these two schools when analysed from the point of view of knowledge and also from the point of view of object (*sāmagrī*), stand as follows :

Advaita point of view

1. *Jnāna-viśleṣaṇa* : First moment of determinate knowledge; knowledge of noun, adjective, relation etc. in unrelated conditions (viśkalita jñāna).

2. *Vaiśiṣṭya-jñāna* : In this stage, there is an increase in knowledge.

1. *Sāmagrī viśleṣaṇa* : First moment of determinate knowledge : Noun, adjective, relation etc. as unrelated units.

2. Emergence of *vaiśiṣṭya* as relation between noun and adjective. In other words there is emergence of something new as a result of *ghaṭa-ghaṭatva sambandha.* So, there is an increase on the objective side *(sāmagrī-kṣetra).*

The Nyāya point of view

Jñāna-viśleṣaṇa :

1. Nirvikalpaka stage of knowledge where there is awareness of noun, adjective, relation etc. as unrelated units.

2. Savikalpaka stage of knowledge: knowledge of substantive adjective relation. (Increase in knowledge).

Sāmagrī-viśleṣaṇa :

1. *Nirvikalpaka* and *Savīkalpaka* do not differ in their *sāmagrī* or object.

2. *Savikalpaka* unfolds all that is implicitly involved in the *nirvikalpaka* stage. So there is no increase in the object. The knowledge may be regarded as containing the seed of the knowledge of difference.

From the above analysis, it is clear that according to both the schools the cognition of *vaiśiṣṭya* arises only after the awareness of the noun, adjective, relation etc. as unrelated units. Differences of opinion arise only in respect of the form of *vaiśiṣṭya.* The Advaita holds that when there is *vaiśiṣṭya-jñāna,* something new and positive is added to the content

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or object of cognition. So, *vaiśiṣṭya* is not the same as *atadvyāvṛtti*. According to Nyāya, however, the object or content remains the same from the first moment to all the subsequent moments. In fact, when the undifferentiated whole is analysed and substantive-adjective relation is cognized, spade work for the knowledge of difference is done by the perceiver. *Vaiśiṣṭya*, in the opinion of the Nyāya-school, is the same as *atadvyāvṛtti*. So from the Nyāya point of view, there is no increase on the objective side of knowledge. Changes occur only in the knowledge-aspect.

The author of the "*Tattva Cintāmaṇi*" has no doubt said that cognition of *adaṇḍa-bheda* arises after the cognition of *daṇḍī puruṣa;* but this statement truly implies that it is from the point of view of knowledge only that *atadvyāvṛtti* arises after *sambandha*; from the point of view of the object, however, there is no change. Again, the seed of *bheda grahaṇa* is sown as soon as the perceiver cognizes *daṇḍī puruṣa*. So there is no harm if one admits or does not admit *ānantarya* between *sambandha* and *atadvyāvṛtti*. According to Advaita, the noun, the adjective, the relation etc. nay, the whole of the object of knowledge is *vikalpa* (thought construction). When there is increase in knowledge, there is also an increase in the *viṣaya* of knowledge. According to Nyāya, however, the object of knowledge is real. There is *sannikarṣa* between the sense organ and a real object. Since the object is real, it remains the same from the first moment of *sannikarṣa* till the end. Knowledge of the object may be vague or clear, *viśada* or *aviśada* but there can be no change in the real object of knowledge.

THE GITA AND THE GANGA

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

EVERY utterance of Swami Vivekananda is a jewel of a statement, an assertion of highly significant sense. It is an aphorism of condensed wisdom, a revelation of supreme truth. Not only in what he says, but in how he says it, it is of arresting import and of inspiring power. This is so because with Vivekananda words did not emanate from the tip of the tongue, they rose from the depths of his soul. With ordinary people words are very often shallow-rooted, but with Vivekananda they were really inmost thoughts expressed — subterranean ideas brought to the surface. His words were sparks issuing out of the flames of being. Though Vivekananda lived and moved among men and was very much human and refreshingly normal, he was really of a class apart; and his heroically-built body encased a super-soul, with ages of penance behind it; he was not one of the common multitude pushed into the arena of existence by the inescapable force of *prārabda-karma* or destiny, to live a dull commonplace life of daily littlenesses for less than two score years and then pass out unnoticed, unmourned, unmissed. He was, on the other hand, a gift to humanity from a compassionate Providence intent on a stupendous man-redeeming task. He was an associate to a God-man, one who came to earth, because he chose to come, in order to wipe out the tears of sorrowing men and open the path of enlightenment to harassed humanity. If Sri Ramakrishna was the Emperor of the Spiritual Realm, Vivekananda was his Prime Minister and Generalissimo. Every thing in and of Vivekananda was wholly Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna and Vivekananda were the two hemispheres of a Spiritual Globe. Vivekananda was the spoken word, and Ramakrishna the inner sense. It is not therefore in any way surprising that profundity marks every one of Vivekananda's utterances, that there is the ring of undeniable truth in every one of his remarks, that what-

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ever he says makes an irresistible appeal to the hearer or reader. For Sri Ramakrishna, his inspirer, was a Seer of Truth whose vision was not limited to this or that segment, but encompassed the totality of existence and striving and fulfilment. He saw all things wholly and completely, not in aspects and parts. Vivekananda's sayings are therefore not mere imaginings and conjectures and guesses about reality, but first-hand records and on-the-spot jottings of a discoverer and finder; faithful impressions of an eye-witness.

Another interesting point about Vivekananda is that no body knew India as he did. He was, for one thing, a condensed India in himself. He was the very Spirit of India incarnate. He was India's heartbeat, India's brainwave, India's soulfulness. He knew the Motherland inside and out, her past was an open book to him, her future lay in a clear vision before him. India was his chief passion. He had no problems other than India's, to be solved. He had no ambitions other than India's, to be worked for and achieved. Her emancipation was his great mission. Her very dust was sacred to him, and he had been for years a pilgrim of the old style, a pedestrian pilgrim, an on-foot pilgrim, on her vast dust, traversing her from head to foot. He literally knew every inch of her. He had bathed in her holy waters, ascended her holy hills, inhaled the airs of her sacred *tirthas*, mingled with all classes of her children, re-lived her days of the Vedas and Upaniṣads, conferred with her sages, drunk deep of her undying ideals, dedicated himself to the working out of the mission of that latest and most thorough-going efflorescence of Indian Culture, Sri Ramakrishna, and had become indistinguishable from what India was and is and will be. Therefore when Vivekananda says a thing about India, he knows what he says and means what he says; it is as if Mother India herself is speaking through him and telling us what she is and what she stands for. Here are a few such revealing self-assertions by India through Vivekananda's mouth:

> "India's theme is religion . . . Her life-blood is spirituality . . . The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in these channels, and the rest will take care of itself . . . If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed Punya Bhumi, it is India. . . India's life is of the same nature as the soul, without beginning and without end, immortal and we are the children of such a country. . . . The banner of the spiritual cannot be raised too high in this country. . . India's gift to the world is the light spiritual. . . . *The Gita and the Ganga constitute the Hinduism of the Hindus.*"

The last of these quotations (put in italics) occurs in a fairly long treatise of Swami Vivekananda entitled *Parivrajak* penned in the course of his second journey to the West in 1900 and contributed to the pages of the Bengali journal *Udbodhan*. This has been rendered into English under the caption *Memoirs of European Travel* and forms a part of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. Written in a light humorous vein the treatise is full of interesting observations on, and penetrating explanations of, men and things.

India is a land of rivers, but Swami Vivekananda singles out the Ganga as typical of the Hindu. Indian religious literature is a vast ocean, but the Swami gives the pride of place to the *Gita*. And he must have had his reasons for confining and concentrating Hinduism within these two glorious G's. What then is the speciality of the Ganga, and what is the uniqueness of the *Gita*?

Apart from the fact that the Ganga is the great fertiliser of the Indian plains and that its perennial supply of silt and water are the basis of India's economic prosperity, the Ganga is, to the Indian, a spiritual treasure-house. It is not just one among the many rivers flowing in India; it is rather a current of culture, the life-blood of Indian faith, belief, wisdom and civilization. India is unthinkable without the Ganga. India and the Ganga are interchangeable. The Ganga basin is physically the North Indian plain, but ideologically the Ganga basin is coextensive

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with India. The Ganga is not the monopoly of the actual dwellers on its banks. The Hindu peasant in a village miles away from the Ganga, as he takes his bath in the village rivulet or tank transports himself in spirit to the Ganga waters and chants 'Ganga, Ganga' as he takes his pious plunge. And as attitude (*bhāva*) is the thing that makes a man what he is, this faith-filled bather does get the merit of Ganga-snāna. To the Hindu the Ganga is not a mere river of earth, it originated in heaven. Lord Śiva is *Gangādhara,* and out of Śiva's locks flows out Ganga's earth-purifying stream. It was Bhagiratha's marathon penance that made the divine Ganga's descent to earth possible. Starting as a rivulet from sacred Gomukhi in the Gangotri glacier the river triumphantly voyages over the expansive plains drawing to its bosom the waters of many tributaries, the Yamuna, hallowed by the association with Krishna's *lila,* being the chief of them. The shrines on the Ganga banks are numerous, Banaras, the City of Śiva Mahādeva, and the Triveni confluence, being the most famous among them. Empires have come and gone; dynasties have risen and perished; ages have succeeded ages; but the eternal Ganga has flowed on, ceaselessly purifying, ceaselessly enriching both soil and soul. A picture of what the Ganga signifies to the Hindu is given below in the words of Swami Vivekananda:

> What wonderful relation is this between mother Ganga and the Hindus? Is it merely superstition? May be. They spend their lives with the name of Ganga on their lips, they die immersed in the waters of the Ganga, men from far off places take away the Ganga water with them, keep it carefully in copper vessels and sip drops of it on holy festive occasions. Kings and Princes keep it in jars and at considerable expense take the water from Gangotri, to pour it on the head of Śiva at Rameshwar! The Hindus visit foreign countries and they take with them Ganga water and the Gita. Last time I went to the West, I also took a little of it with me, fearing it might be needed, and whenever opportunities occurred I used to drink a few drops of it. And every time I drank, in the midst of the stream of humanity, amid that bustle of civilisation, that hurry of frenzied footsteps of millions of men and women in the West, the mind at once became calm and still, as it were. That stream of men, that intense activity of the West, that clash and competition at every step, those seats of luxury and celestial opulence — Paris, London, New York, Berlin, Rome — all would disappear and I used to hear that, wonderful sound of 'Hara,' 'Hara,' to see that lonely forest on the sides of the Himalayas, and feel the murmuring heavenly river coursing through the heart and brain and every artery of the body, and thundering forth 'Hara, Hara, Hara'!

To us of today the Ganga has become even more holy and significant, because its banks have recently been the *Dharma Kshetra* of the lives and labours of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda. The Ramakrishna Culture is verily the Ganga culture. To Sri Ramakrishna the Ganga was no less than *Brahmavāri* the waters of God, the Absolute. For years he lived on the banks of the Ganga where he performed all his marvellous *sādhanas;* and the purport of the verse extracted below finds its best exemplar in him.

त्वत्तीरे वसतिं
तवामलजलस्नानम् ।
तवप्रेक्षणं त्वन्नामस्मरणं
तवोदयकथा संलापनं पावनम् ।

'O Ganga! (I yearn for) residence on your banks, bathing in your pure waters, the sight of you, the remembrance of your name, the sanctifying talk about the story of your origin.'

Sri Ramakrishna was himself the Ganga in many respects — in the perennial nature of his spiritual bounty as well as in his profusion and spontaneity, in his capacity to cleanse and save souls and in the ease with which he could be approached and availed of. Well has Romain Rolland described the Paramahamsa as 'This Ganges with its depths and its reflections, its liquid surface and its currents, its windings and meanders and the millions of beings it bore and nourished'.

The close link between Sri Ramakrishna and the Ganga is well underlined by an incident in the life of the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada

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Devi. She once had a vision. And her visions were always of a deep spiritual import, and mystic significance. 'In a vision she saw Sri Ramakrishna getting down into the Ganga and his whole body dissolving into the sacred waters of that river. Narendra (Vivekananda) was taking that water and sprinkling it on innumerable people with the cry, "Glory unto Ramakrishna!" The vision created a very vivid impression in her mind so much so that for long she felt hesitation in stepping into the water of the Ganga with which the Master's body had become one. This vision of hers synchronised more or less with the inauguration of the great preaching activities of Swami Vivekananda.' And as for Vivekananda himself, well has Romain Rolland referred to him as "this son of the Ganga".

If the Ganga is thus Bhārat in liquid form, Krishna is Bhārat's outstanding human symbol and representative. And the *Gita* is Krishna in word and phrase. He is what he preaches. Very aptly does a verse compare the *Gita* to a goddess pouring the nectar of Advaita; another verse equates this nectar to milk of a superior quality, all the Upanishads being the cows, Krishna being the milkman, Arjuna being the calf, those of mighty intellect being the enjoyers of the milk. In his telling way Sri Ramakrishna points out that when the word *Gita* is repeated ceaselessly the word gets transformed into Tā-gi which is the same as Tyaga or renunciation; therefore the central teaching of the *Gita* is that through renunciation the mind must be centred on God.

Here are a few of Swami Vivekananda's observations on the message of the *Gita*:

It was the author of the *Gita* who for the first time tried to harmonise the different paths. He took the best from what all the sects then existing had to offer and threaded them in the *Gita*. The reconciliation of the different paths of Dharma, and work without desire or attachment — these are the two special characteristics of the *Gita*.

If one reads this one verse

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदय दौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥

(Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha, this is unbecoming of thee. Scorcher of thy foes, shake off this despicable faint-heartedness and rise to fight) — he gets all the merits of reading the entire *Gita*; for in this one sloka lies imbedded the whole message of the *Gita*.

The greatness of little things — that is what the *Gita* teaches, bless the old book!

The *Gita* is the best commentary we have on the Vedanta philosophy.

The doctrine which stands out luminously in every page of the *Gita* is intense activity, but in the midst of it, eternal calmness.

The *Gita* teaches Karma-Yoga. We should work through Yoga (concentration).

Gita no doubt has already become the Bible of Hinduism and it fully deserves to be so.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, is the best authority on Vedanta.

These illuminating remarks of the great Swami give us an adequate idea of the prominent place which the *Gita* holds in Hindu thought and faith.

Surely therefore is Hindu society or the Indian Community Gita-nourished and Ganga-fed. And those of us who aspire to be truly Hindu or genuinely Indian will be near to the fulfilment of our aspiration to the extent to which we make ourselves Ganga-soaked and Gita-inspired.

Giver of delight to the gods in heaven!
Essence of Bliss, adored by the afflicted!
On me shower Thy compassionate love.
He who has made Thy bank his dwelling
Verily abides in Vishnu's realm.

— From Sankara's 'Gangastotra'
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SATADUSANI OF VEDANTA DESIKA

B. H. KAPADIA

Vedanta Deśika,[1] the author of *Śatadūṣaṇi*, was one of the promulgators of Viśiṣṭādvaita. He was born in A.D. 1268 at Himavana in Kanchipuram, in a Vaiṣṇava family known for learning and piety. Vātsya Varadācārya, a descendent in the line of Śri Ramanuja, seeing the unparalleled genius of this child predicted that he will establish the doctrine of Viśiṣṭādvaita and will counteract the influence of the other doctrines.[2] The celebrated pupil of Vātsya Varadācārya, Atreya Ramanuja was the maternal uncle of Deśika. He studied under his supervision and attained mastery at the tender age of twenty in all the branches of traditional sciences. In view of his dexterity and learning he was given the titles Vedāntācārya and Sarvatantrasvatantra. According to *Saṅkalpasūryodaya*[3] these titles were conferred on him at Śrirangam. His life[4] was extremely religious, simple and saintly. He spent his life in preaching the doctrines of Viśiṣṭādvaita, in writing philosophical treatises, and religious books. In the line of Śri Ramanuja he became famous as Venkatanātha. Even though he was of religious temperament yet his opponents used to harass him. He used to bear these hardships patiently.

He used to enter into disputes with scholars of other beliefs and win them over to his faith by his unparalleled art of disputation and sharp intelligence. His disputations are described in *Paramatabhanga* and *Śatadūṣaṇi*. On account of his mastery over the science of poetics and invincibility in argumentation he was given the title of Kavitārkikasiṁha. Like his erudition, his life also was inspiring. It was austere, like that of an ascetic. He lived on alms and despised wealth and fame.

Once in the alms which he obtained, a sympathetic follower of his, had mixed some gold coins. Deśika threw them away the moment he found them out. This characteristic feature of his, i.e., Vairagya, can be discerned in his *Vairagyapancaka* : a small poem of five verses, sent in answer to the invitation of Vidyāraṇya, the then minister of the king of Vijayanagara. His devotion to the Lord, and towards the doctrine of Sri Ramanuja were superb.

His principal treatises in the field of philosophy are : *Tattvamuktākalāpa, Sarvārthasiddhi, Adhikaraṇasārāvali, Nyāyapariśuddhi, Nyāyasiddhañjana, Seśvaramīmaṁsa, Mīmaṁsapāduka,* and *Śatadūṣaṇi*. In each of these, Deśika contributed something new. In *Tattvamuktākalāpa* he deals with Jada, Jīva, Īśvara, Buddhi and Adravya according to Viśiṣṭādvaita. *Sarvārthasiddhi* is a *ṭīkā* in which Deśika has propounded the doctrines laid down in the above work. In *Adhikaraṇasārāvali* Deśika explains the topics of the Adhikaraṇas of *Śrībhāṣya* in verse. In *Nyāyapariśuddhi* he discusses the technical aspects of the Pramāṇas according to Viśiṣṭādvaita. The Adhyātmavāda dealt with briefly in *Nyāyapariśuddhi* is discussed in greater detail in *Nyāyasiddhāñjana. Seśvaramīmāṁsa* and *Mīmāṁsapāduka* are treatises about Mīmāṁsa. In the first work, Deśika elucidates the Mīmāṁsa Sutras of Jaimini and he does this in such a way that they are not in opposition to the conclusions of Bādarāyaṇa. He posits

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[1] The life and a detailed discussion of his works can be gathered from a work written in Tamil on the works of Deśika. Besides, we get information from *Vaibhavaprakaśika* of Mahacarya and *Guruparampara Prabhāva* of Parakala Swamin.

[2] When his maternal uncle saw Deśika for the first time he gave the blessing :

प्रतिष्ठापितवेदान्तः प्रतिक्षिप्तबहिर्मतः ।
भूयास्त्वेविद्यामान्यस्त्वं भूरिकल्याणभाजनम् ॥

[3] Cf. *Saṅkalpasūryodaya*, Act I, pp. 12 and 14 (Nigamaparimala Press) as well as the preliminary verse of *Adhikaraṇasārāvali*.

[4] See *Vaibhavaprakāśika*.

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that Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṁsa are not divergent but they are one and Akhaṇḍa. In *Śatadūṣaṇī* he refutes in detail the Advaita doctrines.

His other works on philosophy are of the nature of commentaries. They are : *Tattvaṭīkā*, a *ṭīkā* on *Śrībhāṣya ; Tātparyacandrikā*, a *ṭīkā* on the *Gītābhāṣya* of Rāmānuja ; *Īśāvāsyopaniṣadbhāṣya* ; *Rahasyarakṣā*, a *ṭīkā* on *Stotraratna* of Yāmunamuni and *Catuḥśloki* and *Gadyatraya* of Rāmānuja ; and *Gītārthasaṁgraharakṣā*, a *ṭīkā* on the *Gītārthasaṁgraha* of Yāmunamuni. Over and above these, *Vedārthasaṁgrahavyākhyā* on *Vedārthasaṁgraha* and *Nigamaparimala* on the works of the Ālvars are supposed to be from the pen of Deśika but they are not available.

Besides the above mentioned treatises, Deśika is the author of 32 works in Maṇipravāla[5] style. In these works, he propounds in a popular style the Viśiṣṭādvaita doctrines. *Rahasyatrayasāra*, an unparalleled work of Deśika is written in this style. *Paramatabhanga* is also a work of this type in which besides Advaita 17 other beliefs are refuted. Kavyas, Dramas, etc. are other works of Deśika. Among kavyas *Yādavābhyudaya*, is about the life of Lord Śri Kṛṣṇa ; *Haṁsasaṁdeśa* is in imitation of Kalidāsa's *Meghadūta* ; *Subhāṣitanīti* deals with ethics ; and *Pādukāsahasra* is about the feet of the Lord of Śrīrangam. *Saṅkalpasūryodaya* is an allegorical drama in ten acts. In this drama Deśika explains the efforts which a Jīva has to make to attain Mokṣa. He has written 29 devotional *sūktas* known as *stotras*. *Pancarātrarakṣā, Nikṣeparakṣā* and *Saccaritrarakṣā* are religious works.

Vedānta Deśika's *Śatadūṣaṇī* is a critical work. It aims at refuting the Advaita doctrines. In the Pūrvapakṣa Deśika has put forth in detail arguments from works on Advaita coming from the pen of his predecessors. In this work Deśika tries to explain the differences between the two great Ācāryas, Śankara and Rāmānuja. In *Advaitasiddhi* and in its gloss *Laghucandrikā* and other works after Vedānta Deśika the objections raised forth in *Śatadūṣaṇī* are refuted. In our modern times in *Śatabhūṣaṇī*, a work written by Śrī Anantakṛṣṇa Śāstriar, in Sanskrit, *Śatadūṣaṇī* is controverted. To give an answer to *Śatabhūṣaṇī* Śrī Uttamura Viraraghavacarya Swami has written an extensive and learned work *Paramārthabhūṣaṇa*. Another such work is Varadācārya's *Tattvasudhā*. Dr Dasgupta in his *History of Indian Philosophy* (vol. 3) makes a very brief review of Deśika's Vādas. Here 39 vādas are reviewed and they are not comprehensive.

Śatadūṣaṇī is of great importance to Viśiṣṭādvaitins. As is clear from the title of the work, it ought to attempt at a scientific discussion of a hundred topics of philosophy. From the opening verse of *Śatadūṣaṇī*,[6] and from *Tattvaṭīkā*[7] it can be inferred that the main object of this work is to refute the doctrines of Śaṅkara and his followers. The logic made use of here is of such works : One establishes one's point by refuting the view of the opponent and by evaluating one's own position. By refuting partial truths and wrong doctrines such works gain an importance. Compared to *jalpa* and *vitaṇḍā* this method is known as *vāda*. In *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya* of Śrī Harṣa *vitaṇḍā* is employed while in *Śatadūṣaṇī*, as in Citsukha's *Tattvapradīpikā*, *vāda* is employed. *Śatadūṣaṇī* being *khaṇḍanamaṇḍanātmaka* (refuting the opponent's views and establishing one's own) is a *vādagrantha*. It is compared to a sword, whereas *Sarvārthasiddhi* is compared to a shield.[8]

[5] In this style there is a mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil.

[6] *Śatadūṣaṇī*. pt. I. p. 5 :—
वादाहवेषु निर्भेत्तुं वेदमार्गं विदूषकान् ।
प्रयुज्यतां शरश्रेणी निशिता शतदूषणी ।

[7] *Tattvaṭīkā*, v. 5 :—
शातितः शतदूषण्यां शकरादिर्मुदाग्रहः ।
शारीरकशरीरं तु व्यक्तमत्र प्रदर्श्यते ।

[8] Cf. *Saptiratnamālikā*, v. 48 :—
सर्वार्थसिद्धिः शतदूषणी च द्वे खेटशास्त्रे कथकाय-
गानाम् ।

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The criticism levelled at Advaita in *Śatadūṣaṇī* is not the first attempt. Before Vedanta Deśika Śrī Yāmuna (in 916-1036) had converted the followers of Advaita to the doctrine of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Ātmasiddhi and Samvitsiddhi have criticised the important tenets of Advaita. After Yāmunācārya this work is carried on by Sri Rāmānuja in the Jijnāsādhikaraṇa of *Śrībhāṣya*. Before Yāmuna, in the first half of the ninth century Māyāvāda was severely criticised by Bhāskara. After Yāmuna Madhva was the foremost of the critics of Advaita.

Sri Ramanuja and Madhva have taken an active part in the criticism of Advaita than any other doctrines because in their times this had a very great importance. Some light is thrown on this as can be gathered from the preliminary verses of *Vedāntasamgraha*. Even though in *Śrībhāṣya* a detailed and exhaustive criticism is levelled at Advaita, yet, after Rāmānuja the doctrines of Advaita still remained very influential. Śrī Harṣa, Ānandabodha and Citsukha are great thinkers of Advaita before Vedānta Deśika and after Rāmānuja. Therefore, Vedānta Deśika had to re-establish the glory of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

While criticising Advaita, Vedānta Deśika follows the thoughts of Sri Rāmānuja as established in the Jijnāsādhikaraṇa of *Śrī Bhāṣya*. At the end of many discussions Deśika quotes from *Śrī Bhāṣya*.[9] Even though the arguments of *Śrī Bhāṣya* are followed in *Śatadūṣaṇī*, yet the author has many points of originality to offer and while ridiculing the opponent he raises quite a few points[10] for discussion.

In *Śrī Bhāṣya*, the Pūrvapakṣa is very short, *Śatadūṣaṇī* amplifies it. (See vāda 36). The criticism is from various points and aspects. On account of his wide knowledge and on account of his astuteness in the art of dispute Vedānta Deśika has done a great job by and for Viśiṣṭādvaita. At the very outset of the work Deśika expresses his conviction that on account of the constant repetition of the arguments in *Śatadūṣaṇī*, the Advaitin could be easily won over to his side. In any case, Deśika in *Śatadūṣaṇī* has re-established the glory of Viśiṣṭādvaita vāda in a very fruitful way and on a logical basis. At the beginning of every Vāda, while quoting the Pūrvapakṣa, he cites from the *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya* only and quotes from no other text pertaining to Advaita. He directly alludes to *Sūtrabhāṣya* of Śaṅkara, *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspati and *Iṣṭasiddhi* of Vimuktātman. In the Pūrvapakṣa of *Śatadūṣaṇī* we can discern the impression of *Brahmasiddhi* of Maṇḍana, *Pancapādikā* of Padmapāda, *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* of Sureśvara, *Vārtika Vivaraṇa* of Prakāśātman, *Saṁkṣepaśārīraka* of Sarvajnātman, *Tattvaśuddhi* of Jnānaghanapāda, *Nyāyamakaranda* of Ānandabodhācārya and *Tattvapradīpikā* of Citsukha. As can be gathered from the life of Deśika, *Śatadūṣaṇī* is the fruit of disputes with the opponents. While criticising Advaita, Deśika follows the style of *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya*. In removing the doubts of common men he enumerates many alternatives. From the title of the work it should have 100 vādas but in the work there are only 66. Like *Tattvaṭīkā* and *Nyāyasiddhāñjani*, the works of Deśika, the remaining vādas must have been lost. According to one view 34 vādas were concerned with refuting the doctrines of Madhva and were not allowed to attain wide popularity. For this we have no proof and in the criticism of Advaita, Dvaita can have no room. According to one view there are only 66 vādas and *śata* is to be construed in the sense of many. But whenever Deśika uses *śata, sahasra* or *pancāṣat* then he uses them in the true sense and hence we have to presume that 34 out of 100 vādas must have been lost. In these 66 vādas many points have been raised. They are: religious, ethical, philosophical, logical and spiritual. In every vāda there is talk about independent Advaita doctrine. In these vādas there is no definite order of arrangement of topics. As and when Vedānta

[9] इदं सर्वं अभिप्रेत्य अभाष्यत (वाद १); अखिलमन्तर्निंचाय ह (वाद २); तदेतदाहुः (वाद ३०); तदेतत्सर्वमुपक्षिप्तं भाष्ये (वाद ४९).

[10] See the discussion about Akhandārtha in Vāda 38.

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Deśika had to argue with the opponents his arguments went to constitute the text of the *Śatadūṣaṇī*. Laghu and Mahāsiddhānta of *Śrī Bhāṣya* were kept in the centre and the disputes were carried on. In *Guruparamparā* there is described the life of Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas. Here the life of Deśika also is depicted. According to it Deśika had to argue with the opponent for seven days. His pupil Perarulal Jeeyar took notes of it every day, gave over his jottings to Deśika on the eighth day who corrected them and gave out as *Śatadūṣaṇī*.[11] Second note about his life can be had from *Vaibhavaprakāśikā* (v. 47) and according to it Deśika himself, after the dispute was over, brought out the summary of the dispute as *Śatadūṣaṇī*. Whatever that may be, it can be surmised from the nature of the work that it was composed from the disputes. The work has its own merit as a work of Vāda. Even though there is no order in the treatment and no methodology still *Śatadūṣaṇī* has its own value in the field of criticism of Advaitavāda. For the sake of convenience, the 66 vādas can be grouped under the following eight heads : (1) pramānas, (2) perception and its varieties, (3) characteristics of Anubhūti, (4) Jīvātmā and Paramātmā, (5) Nirgunabrahma, (6) Viśva, (7) the principle of Avidyā, and (8) *sādhana* and *mukti*.[12]

The *saptavidha anupapattis* or the seven-fold improbabilities or absurdities of the *nirviśeṣādvaita* of Śankara as pointed out by Rāmānuja have been amply magnified here. Some of the refutations are not the refutations of the philosophy of Śankara but of the cult of ritualism, of the sects of the Sanyasins of Advaitic persuasion. Moreover, the 66th vāda or the Sūtrasvārasya Bhangavāda pointing to the conflict between Śankara's Advaita and the Brahma-Sūtras seems, in fact, to have been the concluding refutation.

The story that the *Śatadūṣaṇī* is the record of the Śāstrārtha of Vedānta Deśika with Kṛṣṇa Misra is nothing more than a myth as there is a gap of some 200 years between the times of Kṛṣṇa Misra and Deśika. What *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya* of Śrī Harṣa is for the Advaita or the *Tarka Tāṇḍava* of Vyāsa Tīrtha for Dvaita, the *Śatadūṣaṇī* of Deśika is for Viśiṣṭādvaita. The posterity takes Vedānta Deśika to be the only Viśiṣṭādvaitin Vedantin, who, by his contribution, has given the Rāmānuja Darśana, a high logical character, similar to that given by Śrī Harṣa, Citsukha, Madhusūdana Sarasvati and Appayya Dīkṣita to the Śankara Vedānta. Vedānta Deśika is the only Viśiṣṭādvaitic dialectician who is on par with such great Madhva polemic writers as Jaya Tīrtha and Vyāsa Tīrtha.

The work has a masterly commentary called the *Caṇḍa Māruta*. The author Doddācārya (16th century A.D.) is known as Mahācarya for writing this very commentary. The *Vedāntācārya-vijaya-campū* a prose-poetic composition on the life and works of Vedānta Deśika eulogizes the *Śatadūṣaṇī* and its author in high terms. Many a Viśiṣṭādvaitic writer followed the *Śatadūṣaṇī* dialectic of Vedānta Deśika. The *Advaitavidyā vijaya* of Mahācārya is one such work. The *Brahmajnānanirāsa* of one Śrinivāsa mentions the *Śatadūṣaṇī* by name and discusses the points touched upon by Vedānta Deśika. Some other commentaries on *Śatadūṣaṇī* are : *Nṛsiṁha Rājīya* of Nṛsimha Deva and *Sahasrakiraṇī* of one Śrīnivāsācārya. These commentaries suggest the importance of *Śatadūṣaṇī* in the polemics of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

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[11] See *Guruparmparāprabhāva*, p. 136.

[12] See *Śatabhūṣaṇī*, p.p. 11-12. Śrī Anantakṛṣṇa Śāstri has grouped the vādas under the following 10 heads : Sūtra Svārasyabhangavāda, Avidyā, falsity of the world, the meaning of the first sūtra of Vedānta, discussion about Brahma and sādhanacatuṣṭaya, meaning of *tvam*, meaning of *tat*, *tīkā* of the Mahāvākya, Jīvanmukti and topics not correlated to Advaita.

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AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH TO THE BHAGAVAD GITA

V. PERUMAL

THE *Bhagavad Gita* is the song of God as well as the song about God. It is a song of divine order which has permanent value and which has proved and continues to prove the test of time. It is the music of life which has a double capacity, of arresting the heart and holding the intellect, simultaneously. The *Gita* is like a deep ocean. The more one controls one's breath and remains at the bottom the greater the amount of pearls can one collect from the bed of the ocean. Similarly, the more intensely one studies the *Gita* and practises the tenets enunciated therein the greater becomes one's intellectual and spiritual achievements.

The vast majority of people think that the *Gita* is not helpful in their day to day life since it deals with God, universe, renunciation and the like. But it is a wrong conclusion, hastily arrived at. The maxims propounded in the *Gita* can certainly be applicable to every human being on the globe provided they are correctly comprehended. The *Gita* does not contain dry and vague philosophy which can be divorced from human life. In a word, the *Gita* is a spiritual reference book which contains the sum and substance of advanced thought, explained and illustrated in an easy flowing language. An ancient verse extols the *Gita* thus : 'All Upaniṣads are the cows ; the cowherd's son, Krishna, is the one who milks ; Arjuna is the calf and intelligent men are those who drink that milk, the nectar of the great *Gita*.'

The *Gita* conveys its sublime message through the oral method, which is one of the powerful ways in imparting knowledge from the pedagogical point of view. Though the *Gita* is a gist and synthesis of the Hindu scriptures, one will find it has a universal appeal as it envisages a religion which comes from within.

Man has two natures, a higher and a lower. The *Bhagavad Gita* aims at the manifestation of one's higher nature and elimination of the baser ; in other words it aims at the removal of animality and manifestation of divinity of man. Let us here confine to the twelfth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* and arrive at the religion it reveals from different points of view.

THE PHYSICAL ASPECT

'A Sound Mind in a sound body' is a well-known proverb. The superstructure and its many-sided architectural excellence cannot exist unless the building has a firm foundation. Likewise one cannot build up a spiritual life unless one possesses a sound physique.

Human beings are classified into three main divisions according to their outstanding capacities : (1) those possessed of a great amount of physical stamina ; (2) those having a preponderantly emotional nature ; and (3) those possessed of intellectual brilliance. The *Gita* makes this classification clear and then prescribes the way each class of people are to follow to reach 'the kingdom of God', or enjoy ever-lasting bliss.

People having a restless temperament can follow the Karma Mārga or the path of action ; those that are emotionally inclined can follow the Bhakti Mārga or the way of devotion and those whose power of discrimination is sharp and are always on the alert can follow the Jñāna Mārga or the path of knowledge. Thus, the *Gita* gives everyone ample scope to unite his soul with God. The temperamentally active persons, as said already, can by righteous deeds or action that are pleasing to God pursue their spiritual path.

abhyāse 'pi asamartho 'si matkarma paramo bhava
madartham api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi. — GITA XII. 10.

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'Cleanliness is next to Godliness.' Physical cleanliness is the index of mental health and spiritual purity. If the body is healthy, the mind can be clean; if the mind is clean, thoughts arising in it will be flawless; if thought is flawless the words will be pure; if the words are pure the actions will be pious; if the actions are pious the results will be fruitful. So, it goes without saying that physical purity has its own value in the spiritual life also.

The *Gita* aims at the attainment of individual's equanimity at every level — physical and mental. It expects everyone to possess a sound physical constitution. The body should not only be free from diseases and deformities but should have a resisting capacity to extreme heat and cold. Further, the body should be trained and cultivated in such a manner as to experience alike the pairs of opposites, pain and pleasure and the like. Such a type of physical neutrality is the foundation for intellectual equipoise.

śitoṣṇa sukhaduhkheṣu samaḥ saṅga-vivarjitaḥ. (Ibid. 18)

Thus, from the physical and physiological points of view, the *Bhagavad Gita* aims at the harmonious development of man.

The Mental Aspect

Every profession requires and demands certain special abilities and traits. If a person does not possess the requisite qualifications, he cannot succeed in that career. A soldier should have enormous physical verve; a technician must possess skill; a lawyer should possess the gift of speech; an author must have a good command of language; and a man who practises religion should have the right type of mental aptitude. The religion envisaged by the Gita has a wide appeal because it caters to the needs of people with different mental make up. So, it stands to reason that mental propensity is an essential qualification for a person to embrace a faith.

Though there are three main paths viz., the paths of action, devotion and knowledge, the ultimate goal is one and the same. For instance, a man may travel from one place to another by bicycle, bus, train, ship or plane. The choice of the vehicle depends mainly on his financial capacity and next on his whims and fancies. Though people may travel by different kinds of vehicles, under normal conditions, it is a physical certainty that all of them will reach their destiny. Similarly the follower of each path shall certainly reach his goal, provided he has fixed his mind on God. Such a single-minded devotion is emphasized throughout the *Gita*.

mayī āveśya mano ye māṁ nitya yuktā upāsate
śraddhayā parayopetāḥ te me yuktatamā matāḥ. (Ibid. 2)

From the spiritual point of view, the fundamental condition expected of every man is the control of his senses. The concept of Lord Krishna serving as a charioteer conveys a great message. We can give an allegorical meaning also to it. The body is the chariot, Arjuna is the soul, the master of the chariot; intellect is the charioteer Krishna; mind stands for the reins; and the senses are the horses. It here implies that all the senses should be under the full control of the intellect if we have to be sanely occupied. Controlling the senses does not in any way mean that one should suppress one's feelings, just like controlling the horse does not imply killing the horse. Just as the rider has to bring the horse under control with the help of reins, so also one's intellect must fully control one's senses through one's mind. There is a proverb, 'A man without religion is like a horse without a bridle'. In short, the purport of the injunctions of the *Gita* is that man must be the supreme and unquestionable master of his senses. When man controls his senses and is guided by unprejudiced reason he certainly lifts himself from the animal plane to the spiritual plane. On the other hand, when he becomes a slave to his senses he remains on the animal plane itself. Hence man's progress and perfection is directly proportionate to the con-

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trol he has obtained over his mind and senses.

It is a well-known psychological truth that more often than not man is carried away by his emotions, sentiments and feelings. He is elated at a gain and depressed at a loss. Until and unless man stabilises the emotional arena in himself, he will find it impossible to create a mental equilibrium. Mental equanimity is the mother of 'peace of mind'. Peace of mind easily paves the way for the realization of God.

Devotion and contemplation are the actions connected with the mind. And it is said heart is the seat of the mind. When the mind is entirely free from the pairs of opposite emotions there will be no mental agitation, there will be the climate for peace of mind. And peace of mind is important not only from the spiritual point of view but in fact it is a psychological necessity for the harmonious development of man's mental health.

The *Gita* advocates a single-minded devotion. It expects of a devotee as much one-pointedness in his meditation, prayer and contemplation as a hunter does while aiming his arrow at the target.

Most people do not even move their little fingers to help another without expecting some thing in return. Many count their chickens before they are hatched. The behaviour of man corroborates beyond doubt that he is highly selfish and his mind, heart and intellect are perfectly focussed on the fruits of his action. Regarding actions and fruits, the *Gita* has much to say. Briefly it lays down two principles : (1) that every man should do his duty with all his might and main ; (2) that he must completely renounce the fruits of his actions along with his 'I'ness and 'my'ness. If these two sublime principles are adhered to, the sorrowful aspect of human life can be minimized. By way of advocating these two maxims the *Gita* teaches the right type of mental training which blossoms into mental culture in the long run. It says : Knowledge is better than practice (without knowledge) ; meditation (with knowledge) is better than mere knowledge ; renunciation of fruits of actions is better than meditation because peace follows such a renunciation.

śreyo hi jñānaṁ abhyāsāt jñānāt dhyānaṁ viśiṣyate
dhyānāt karmaphalatyāgas tyāgāt śānitranantaraṁ. (Ibid. 12)

In this verse the *Gita* has revealed the secret of human happiness. This sacred book trains its votary to live in the world without becoming worldly, as the water-drop on the lotus-leaf.

THE SOCIAL ASPECT

The *Gita* appeals to the social sense and social consciousness of people to a large extent. Man is a social being. He must contribute his share towards the social harmony and prove that he is human by his actions. He should identify himself in the joys and sorrows of his brethren. One of the social duties of man as envisaged by the *Gita* is that he should rejoice in the welfare of all beings, for unless the social horizon of man's mind expands, realization of social harmony will prove to be a utopia.

Human beings are expected to live in amity and brotherhood for that is one of the qualities that distinguishes them from animals. To err is human and to forgive is divine. One's greatness lies not in meeting out vengeance on his fellowman but in forgiveness. This the *Gita* briefly, at the same time vividly, teaches :

adveṣṭā sarvabhūtānāṁ maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca
nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ samaduhkha sukhah kṣamī. (Ibid. 13)

The relationship between man and the world has been described in the *Gita* as follows : Man should acquire such perfection that he could live without injuring others and his mental stability should be such as would not be upset by any thing. In order to enjoy social liberty and social harmony man should be absolutely free from envy, fear and anxiety. When these and other tensions are absent,

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harmony and peace will certainly enter into the social atmosphere. Thus, the teachings of the *Gita* can be practised in society for its upliftment.

The Intellectual Aspect

'It is the religion, the inquiry into the beyond, that makes the difference between man and animal,' says Swami Vivekananda. Man is a rational animal. Religion is not based on blind faith. The very purpose of Jñāna Mārga or the way of Wisdom implies the realization of God through knowledge. In order to discover our divinity through the intellectual process (discrimination) one should anchor his intellect in God. Unless one's discrimination is used to incline the intellect Godward nothing spiritual can be attained.

The second important characteristic enunciated in the *Gita* is the intellectual skill and alertness based on intellectual integrity. It is a moral certainty that one's discriminating faculty will stand him in good stead in his spiritual pursuit. To follow a faith without its knowledge is like undertaking a journey without knowing the destination.

The third significant trait is intellectual equilibrium. Just as man is expected to maintain physical equilibrium in cold and heat and mental equilibrium in enmity and friendship, similarly, he should maintain intellectual impartiality in honour and dishonour. As a matter of fact, intellectual equipoise is the mother of sanity of thought which blossoms into intellectual maturity in the long run. Such a man will not attach any importance to name and fame. Thus the *Gita* prepares man to comprehend and digest the real philosophy of life with much ease.

The Spiritual Aspect

At the physical level there is no difference between man and animal, as sensual pleasure is common to both. But at the intellectual level, there is a wide gulf between them. Man can reason logically and scientifically whereas an irrational being cannot. At a more subtle level there is the spiritual aspect. Intellectual maturity results in spiritual budding. At the gross level man enjoys physical pleasure, at the mental level he enjoys intellectual pleasure; at the refined subtle level he enjoys spiritual bliss.

One's spiritual bliss lies not only in peace but in completely identifying oneself with God. Unless a sense of oneness with God is felt, the words spirit, spiritual bliss, peace that passeth understanding and the like will be nothing but meaningless jargons. Though the religion revealed in the *Gita* has a wider connotation and appeals to the various faculties of man, its spiritual appeal is unique and vital. But very few people realize this.

The Moral Aspect

'If wealth is lost, nothing is lost; if health is lost something is lost; if character is lost everything is lost,' runs a proverb. Morality coupled with wisdom is the sum and substance of the Hindu culture. 'Desire, anger and greed,' says the *Gita*, 'is the way to darkness, therefore renounce them.' A world of meaning is contained in this aphorism and requires a life time to unearth it fully. The *Gita* at other places too gives practical directions regarding duty, moral behaviour, and the like. But mere knowledge of the contents of the *Gita* does not help. One's life should also be moulded in the line of its tenets. The moral aim of the *Gita* is to enable its votary to implement the maxims in his daily life.

God as Revealed in the Gita

There are certain characteristics attributed to God which have been accepted by almost all saints and seers. The third verse of the twelfth chapter mentions eight of these characteristics, viz. undecaying, indefinable, unmanifested, omnipresent, imponderable, unchangeable, immovable and eternal. God is undecaying. A thing which has birth, has death also. This is the law of nature. The other corollary namely that which has no birth, has no death is also true. God is not born and

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hence can have no death. He was, is, and will be.

God is indefinable. We can define an object if it comes under our sense perception and experience. For instance, gold can be defined as a precious yellow metal. Its uses can also be defined. But we cannot define God because, He does not come under the purview of common human perception and experience. Hence, He cannot be defined in human language.

He is unmanifest. He is visible neither to the naked eye nor to the uncleansed mind. However, He shows Himself to a devotee who has purified his mind. Likewise, presence of God can be felt only by a spiritually advanced soul, but they are very few.

God is present every where at all times. God is present in every atom and He manifests Himself indirectly, as the fragrance in flower, as the light in the moon, as fire in the fuel and so on.

God's nature cannot even be pondered over, for the thinking faculty of human being is limited. Man can think of matters of everyday experience. He can only imagine those objects which he is ignorant of.

God is immutable. Every object is liable to change. Whatever is created is mutable. Man's idea about God might change but He does not. If He is subject to the law of change He is subject to the law of perishability. Neither does God change by Himself from one stage to another nor can He be changed by any force whatever, for all forces get their strength and sustenance from God.

God is ubiquitous. Scientifically speaking an object can move from the place which it occupies to another, i.e. movement can be with reference to another object, movement is relative. Since God pervades the entire universe, the question of His moving from one place to another does not arise.

God is conditioned neither by space nor by time. He eternally exists.

CONCLUSION

Summing up, we come to the conclusion that religion does not make man inactive, inert and irresponsible. On the other hand, it corrects man when he goes wrong, guides him when he stumbles, puts him on the right path when he goes astray. The *Gita* never encourages idleness. That the *Gita* was taught on the battlefield shows how much valuable it is for all people who are fighting their individual battles on the homefront. It is a scripture which supplies the needs of all devotees and seekers.

RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

THE MEANING OF THE TERM 'RAJA YOGA'

RAJA YOGA is a practical and scientifically worked out psycho-physical method of attaining concentration and meditation. This method is needed, more or less, in every yoga or the way to Reality and therefore, it is regarded as the royal path.[1] According to Romain Rolland 'Rāja yoga is the Rājāh, the king of yogas. It is yoga *par excellence*. It is an experimental psycho-physical method.'[2]

THE SOURCES OF THE TERM 'RAJA YOGA'

The term 'Rāja yoga' does not appear anywhere in the principle Upaniṣads, Pātañjala yoga Sūtras or the Bhagavadgītā; but, it is frequently used in some of the minor Upaniṣads, e.g., *Maṇḍalabrāhmaṇopaniṣad* (III-4, 5), *Yogatattvopaniṣad* (I-137-138), *Advayatārakopaniṣad*. The *Yogaśikhopaniṣad* mentions the names of Mantra, Laya and Hatha yogas and considers them as steps to Rāja yoga, but, all of them are included in one Mahāyoga, which is called by those four

[1] Akhilananda, *Hindu Psychology*, pp. 187-88.
[2] *Life of Vivekananda*, p. 242.

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different names.[3] By its practice a yogin will shine out after attaining the psychic powers like *aṇimā* etc.[4]

The *Yogatattvopaniṣad* prescribes the practice of twenty stages to attain Rāja yoga. These stages are : Yama, niyama, āsana, prānāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāranā, dhyāna, samadhi — (the eightfold yoga of Patañjali), Mahāmudrā, mahābandha, mahāvedha, khecari, jālaṁdhara, uddiyāna, mūlabandha, dirghapraṇavasandhāna, siddhāntaśravaṇa, vajroli, amaroli, and sahajoli.[5]

The *Maṇḍalabrāhmanopaniṣad* expects a Rāja yogin to know well the nine *cakras*, their functions and control, the six *ādhāras* (the regions which are the supports of the *cakras*); three kinds of introspection (internal, external and intermediary) and five kinds of ethers, otherwise he is a yogin in name, possessing merely book-knowledge.[6]

A careful perusal of these minor Upaniṣads [7] shows that they bear a very close influence to the Pātañjala yoga in them, and all of them advocate the philosophy of the Advaita Vedānta, for the realization of the Nirguna, Nirviśeṣa Brahman, who is described by the Upaniṣads to be of the nature of eternal consciousness and bliss. These yoga Upaniṣads seek to expound the essentials of Rāja yoga. It seems that the seers of the Vedāntic age had realized that the psycho-physical discipline advised by Patañjali could easily bring in the dissolution of the mind and thereby attain its equilibrium. The *Yogatattvopaniṣad* accepts the view that no knowledge of Brahman can be possible without yoga. It asks : "How can knowledge become a certainty, the bestower of liberation when unaccomplished by yoga? Likewise yoga devoid of knowledge is incompetent to bring about liberation."[8] Therefore, the realization of Brahman may be made possible when the knowledge is raised to the status of certainty by the yogic practices. After hearing about Brahman, meditation and contemplation are necessary for its realization.

These Upaniṣads seem to be least inclined to talk about the dualistic philosophy of the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, but they do refer to its practices. These practices have no indispensable relation with the philosophy of Sāṁkhya. Patañjali seems to have borrowed philosophical material from Sāṁkhya and directed his 'efforts to co-ordinating philosophical material around practical formulas for concentration, meditation and ecstasy.'[9] Therefore, those who preached the Upaniṣadic philosophy were justified in making use of the yoga practices in order to reach their own ideal (Brahman). This becomes clearer when we see that in the *Aparokṣānubhūti, Vivekacuḍāmaṇi* and *Ātmabodha* which are known as Śaṁkara's works, the yoga ('Rāja Yoga') has been considered as indispensable for the realization of Brahman.[10] The various practices of *aṣṭānga yoga* are advised to be practised in the *Aparokṣānubhūti* (stanza, 102, 103) for the direct cognition of Reality.

Vijñānabhikṣu treats 'Rāja yoga' and Pātanjala yoga as synonyms, because in his *Yogasārasaṁgraha* (a short treatise on Pātanjala yoga) he says that he does not want 'to enter into the details of postures, because our subject-matter is Rāja yoga (in which postures occupy only a secondary position).'[11] Thus, the *Yogasārasaṁgraha* is a book on Rāja Yoga. But Vijñānabhikṣu has quoted from *Nāradīya Haribhaktiśuddhodaya* in which Nārada is said to give a description of Rāja yoga. Nārada advises the Brāhmanas to merge the human self into the Supreme Self. 'An aspirant is to merge the human self — which wrongly or needlessly conceives itself to be the doer of acts and enjoyer of the results — which is yet pure on account of its being devoid of limitations — into the unconditioned Supreme Self.'[12]

[3] I-129, 130.
[4] I-137-138.
[5] 24 to 27.
[6] IV-5.
[7] *The Yoga Upanisads*, edited by Pandit A. Mahadeva Sastri (published. Adyar Library).
[8] 14-15.
[9] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga Immortality and Freedom*, p. 7.
[10] *Aparoksanubhuti*, 114, 143; Atmabodha, 37, 45, 48.
[11] Edited by Jha, (T. P. H. Madras, p. 79).
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 98.

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According to Vijñānabhikṣu to regard the human self as separate from Brahman is an illusion, because such a differentiation is due to *māyā*. When a man is equipped with yoga, he becomes merged in Brahman. This shows that he does not keep a hard and fast distinction between the yoga of Patañjali and Advaitic conception of the identity of soul and Brahman. Thus, for the realization of the spiritual goal, the Pātanjala practices may be made use of.

Swami Akhilananda considers Patanjali as the father of applied psychology (Rāja yoga) and in his opinion the term 'Rāja yoga' always refers to the systematic thought propounded by Patañjali. [13]

[13] *Hindu Psychology*, p. 104.

(*To be continued*).

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

THE article 'Goal of Human Life According to Jnana Yoga' is a class talk on *Vivekacūḍamani* given by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder-leader of the Vedanta Society of Chicago at the Society on May 2, 1935 and has been made available to us by Mrs. Mallika Clare Gupta, a disciple of the Swami, now living at Calcutta.

Srimati Pronoti Devi is from the Vivekananda Vidya Bhavan, Calcutta a first grade College of the Sri Ramakrishna Sarada Mission.

Dr Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D. is Reader in Philosophy, Patna University, Patna.

Sri R. Ramakrishnan, M.A.,L.T. is Headmaster, N. N. R. High School, Nangavaram.

Dr B. H. Kapadia, M.A., Ph.D. is Reader and Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth, Gujrat.

Sri V. Perumal, M.A., B.T. is a Lecturer in Tamil in the K. G. F. First Grade College, Oorgaum.

Sri Braj Bihari Nigam is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore.

IS NOT RETHINKING NECESSARY ?

WHILE an unbending attitude towards oppression, insult or aggression is a most welcome trait in man, society or Government, it becomes the most detestable fault when it is applied in a wrong direction, for instance the failure to recognize one's faults and mend them. Obduracy in such an instance shows the security one enjoys in one's position. From security arises irresponsibility and from thence a step forward is self-righteousness. And from self-righteousness comes the corruption of the mind, and crookedness of thinking; for right thinking cannot allow man to be self-righteous. Right thinking makes man conscious of his duties more than of his rights. When India, which was once a self-sufficient country at least in food, is still dependent on other countries to meet its demand on this front and when every caution to plug wastage at every stage, viz. storage, transport, distribution and consumption is needed, here we have a report which is the third instance of damage said to have been suffered by food stuffs. We are giving here the news item that appeared in *The Hindu*, June 11, 1965.

RICE PARTIALLY DAMAGED BY RAIN

CALICUT, June 10.

Along with a party of Pressmen, I personally saw yesterday afternoon the partially damaged rice bags that were received at the Westhill Station here. But officials of the Food Corporation here denied that there was any damage to the rice bags.

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On Tuesday night 10,000 bags of rice from Andhra in 31 box wagons, covered with tarpaulins, were received from Erode at that station. But on account of a heavy, continuous and torrential downpour of rain from 8.30 in the night upto 9 a.m. on Wednesday, totalling over five inches of rain in the city and the surrounding areas, rain-water found its way somehow inside the wagons, resulting in the drenching of a number of rice bags. Food officials started removing the rice bags only after three in the evening.

It may be mentioned that this is the third time during the last two months when rice bags received here were found partially damaged. If timely steps had been taken to remove the rice bags immediately after they were received, this damage would not have occurred.—(F.O.C.)

These are only instances which cannot escape notice and which are taken note of by everyone and if even in this condition the people responsible are unconcerned we do not know what occurs at the stage of storage which is not easily accessible to the public. Is it not time that a thorough rethinking is done about this? Or should we wait for another food-crisis?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ANCIENT MEDIEVAL AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY: Pp. 507. Price $7.50.

THE JEWISH WORLD IN THE TIME OF JESUS: Pp. 288. Price $6.00.

Both by Charles Guignebert. Publishers: University Books Inc., New Hyde Park, New York.

M. Charles Guignebert taught the History of Christianity at the University of Sorbonne for thirty years and the fruits of his mature scholarship are recorded in his writings which caused a great stir and controversy when they were first published, but are increasingly getting confirmed by the events of history such as the discovery of the famous scrolls etc.

In the first book, Dr. Guignebert studies the rise and development of Christianity in 3 broad periods —ancient, medieval and the modern. He analyses in the first part the various elements of early Christianity and shows how it was essentially a mystery Religion of the Eastern *genre*. How far the principles and practices were followed up in the succeeding ages, how they were modified and substituted by new institutions and dogmas is the subject matter of the rest of the book. The writer devotes considerable portion of the work to a survey of the periodical conflicts between the Church and Science. He points out the advantages enjoyed by the Protestant section of the religion by means of its comparative freedom of organisation and practice, a factor which is absent from the closely knit unity of the Catholics. He notes that the movement of Catholicism has not been able to keep pace with the development of the mind of modern man and concludes: "It may happen that a new religion may one day issue from it, that a life-principle of religious *revival* may well forth from its ruins but as far as it is strictly speaking Catholicism, that is, as far as it is one of the definite historic forms of Christianity, its role seems to be virtually at an end in the world. Its hearth is still red but there is no more fuel, and the fire is slowly expiring, the chill of death is upon it."

In the book on the *Jewish World*, the learned author shows how the Jewish religion from which arose the Christian, was already a synthesis of many traditions—Persian, Egyptian, Babylonian etc.—before Jesus was born. Gnostic practices and beliefs from the various semi-mystic communities that flourished in those times had made their own contribution. Jesus, the author points out, was the natural product of this environment which was posterior to the Old Testament. As Dr Potter points out in his foreword: "This is the main message of this book—that religions come by natural evolution and not by miraculous creation by divine fiat, and that Judaism and Christianity are not only no exceptions to that law, but rather excellent illustrations thereof. One detects a recurrent note of surprise on the author's part that good Christian and Jewish people either cannot see, or refuse to admit, so patent a fact. He hammers home the evidence that the whole of Judeo-Christian theological complex is a 'normal development', the 'natural response to contact with foreign patterns of thought' and therefore a 'phenomenon' neither 'unusual nor surprising in the least.'"

The institutions of the different communities like the Essenes, the tradition of the various peoples beyond the borders of Palestine, that have gone into the making of the Religion that is associated with Jesus are described in detail, well-documented.

Both the volumes are a substantial addition to literature on the subject.

M. P. PANDIT.

DHYANA YOGA: By Dr Mohan Singh Ubero Dewan. Published at Dhyana Yoga Mandir, 57, Sector 16-A, Chandigarh H-2. Pages 83. Price not stated.

Dr Mohan Singh has had a wide experience of saints, mystics and spiritual practices during the sixty years of his quest he writes about. The present work is devoted to an exposition of *Dhyana Yoga* from the point of view of the *Yoga-Upanishads* which approach the subject from a different angle than Patanjali's. Their processes are more physiological than psychological. We have here a full translation of the *Yoga-Raja Upanisad* (42 verses)

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followed by relevant extracts from Allied Upanishads clarifying the concepts and intricate points. The writer makes some notable observations which could be made only on the basis of experience, e.g., 'the six or nine centres for *dhyana* are not just points in the human body but are really so many situations, positions, levels, entities, processes (all forward-moving as well as reversible, and interpenetrant), the four realms of the physical, physiological, metaphysical and psychological, all co-existent and co-operant.'

M. P. PANDIT.

RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS DISCIPLES: By Christopher Isherwood. Pub.: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 11, New Fetter Lane, London, E.C.-4. Pp. 348, Price 36 s. nett.

Also Published by Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta. (Printed in Great Britain). Price Rs. 12.50.

It is good that this exquisite monograph of everlasting work and value, should have come from the pen of so distinguished a scholar and savant as Christopher Isherwood who has drunk deep of the perennial springs of Hindu religion and Vedanta. For the life of Sri Ramakrishna could not be differentiated from the mysticism which he had practised, and which had not merely reconciled the various schools of Hinduism with each other, but Hinduism with alien religions antagonistic to it. Nor could his biographer omit to dwell on the salient teachings, which the Paramahamsa had taught by his personal example.

To the author, Sri Ramakrishna is an 'incarnation of God upon earth'; and if he had sometimes assumed 'the ignorance and weaknesses of ordinary men', it was 'in order to be an example to others by transcending them' (p. 60). Not unnaturally, perhaps, Mr Isherwood could not reconcile himself to dismiss as fiction the visions which both Khudiram, and Chandra had experienced prior to Sri Ramakrishna's advent (p. 22). There was in fact a striking similarity between his boyhood experiences and those in the recorded lives of Krishna, Sankara and Chaitanya and of Christ (p. 34), even as there was similarity between his sadhana and the austerities of Gautama Buddha and Christ (p. 60).

A biography is not merely a record of the events and incidents in the life of its subject; it has to evaluate his mission in the light of contemporary trends. Mr Isherwood has not omitted any incident of note in the life of the Bhagavan, but each event, the reader is made to understand, was part of one majestic whole wherein the tenets of not merely the Hindu religion with all its variegated ramifications, but of every other religion or sect had come into play and had been woven into one unitive experience. Sri Ramakrishna on this footing alone, can be reckoned an Avatara, although he had assumed a certain measure of ignorance in order to 'set us, the example of a spiritual aspirant, wrestling with genuine fears, doubts and temptations' (p. 99). He had mastered in his own way, the five-fold varieties of devotion (p. 111); and although he had been engaged in the most extreme form of dualistic worship, he had totally identified himself with Brahman during his contact with Tota Puri. But that was, as the author rightly points out (p. 119), because Ramakrishna had demonstrated that Brahma Jnana could also be attained even by the path of devotion; the more so, since the (other) path of discrimination demands 'a most powerful will and strict austerity and its occupational risk, pride' (p. 119). One could discover a parallelism in the case of Sankara Bhagavatpada, the apostle of monism, who besides composing innumerable stotras, had installed the Shakti form of Iswara in his Peethas. Sri Ramakrishna's assumption of 'Madhura Bhava' was hence not inconsistent with the principles of Vedanta, because in the ultimate analysis it was a step in 'the obliteration of body-consciousness' (p. 112).

Mr Isherwood has laid all votaries of Hinduism under a deep sense of obligation by his penetrating analysis of many of the cherished ideas, cults and institutions connected with Hinduism: and his reasoned justification of every one of them must carry its lesson to the various detractors within its fold and outside it. India, to him, is the most religious country in the world; and the Hindu religious philosophers were much more truly scientific in their outlook than modern scientists. He has, in consequence, no patience with the 'cultural hybrids' in our country who had taken as gospel 'the stupid accusations' of the English missionaries. He could never excuse the Britishers for having brought into this country 'scientific atheism and missionary evangelism' (p. 154).

He does not regard Hinduism as 'polytheist', since its source book, the Vedas, state 'again and again that the substratum of all the main divine forms is Brahman, the one and indivisible' (p. 155).

He regards the caste system as God-ordained because 'to live your life in accordance with caste dharma, is to evolve towards His knowledge' (p. 9). He has admirably simplified Hindu theology in a series of well-conceived syllogisms, dispelling the many misconceptions that a votary of Hinduism has to reckon with (pp. 49, 50). He has described with clarity the various manifestations of the 'Kundalini' Shakthi (pp. 63 and 64).

With rare insight, he has delved into the mysteries of the seriously misunderstood Tantric cult or 'discipline' (pp. 101 and 102), and his conclusion is that it is designed to help the aspirant overcome 'attraction and revulsion' and 'realise the indwelling God-head' (*ibid.*).

His account of Nirvikalpa and Savikalpa Samadhis (pp. 61, 62 and 118) is instructive. Not less valuable is his narration of Ramakrishna's Sadhana in quest of Brahman (p. 62). Many will relish his clear-cut analysis of the five-fold varieties of devotion (Bhakti cult) (p. 111).

The author has assigned a due place to the Holy Mother, and has included many things of note in her illustrious life. The account of Swami Vivekananda is a marvel of compression and condensation. Justice has been done to his meteoric flashes in all his all too brief span of life. Swami Brahmananda, 'a man of God', has been portrayed admirably.

To the author, Sri Ramakrishna was a phenomenon, an extra-ordinary and mysterious one at that: And to the question which he poses at the end whether that phenomenon should be taken as the starting point of a change in one's own ideas

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and life, the answer is in the affirmative, with the rider that the author has made a priceless contribution to that end for all time to come, by this publication.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

NEW AND OLD GLEANINGS: By Mira Bahen. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14 Pp. 50. Price 60 P.

This is in many ways a unique publication. The authoress, one of Gandhiji's devoted disciples, gives us the impressions which the British statesmen had formed of the Mahatma during the worst periods of Indo-British relationship. They show that however much they had differed from him in the political field, their respect and affection for him had been unbounded and sincere.

The jottings from the Mahatma's letters and conversations, which deal with his philosophy of truth and non-violence, add value to the book.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

THE BEGINNINGS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: By Franklin Edgerton. Pub.: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, London. Pp. 362. Price 45 s.

The name of Prof. Edgerton is very familiar to students of Sanskrit and Philosophy, as the Translator in English of *Mimamsa Nyaya Prakasa* of Apadeva and the most popular *Panchatantra* tales. The book under review contains translations of selections from the Rig Veda, Atharva Veda, Upanisads, Bhagavad Gita and Moksa Dharma from Mahabharata. The translation of many of these texts were done many decades ago and the author tells us that they have been the objects of intensive study by him for decades and discussed in seminars with advanced Sanskrit pupils. In addition to these texts, Prof. Edgerton has written three chapters summing up in a final form his views on early Indian Philosophical speculation 'arrived at only after a lifetime of philological study and reflection'. In the main, his exposition of the origin of Indian Philosophy, the Upanisads and the philosophy of Mahabharata is fair and clear and is on conventional lines. The English translation of the texts is clear.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

THE WORLD'S LIVING RELIGIONS: By Archie J Bahm. Laurel Edition. Pub.: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 750, Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. Paper back 75 c. Pp. 384.

The book under review is a searching comparison of the faiths of East and West, and is written by Bahm who as a Fulbright Research Scholar worked on the history of Indian Philosophy in the Benaras Hindu University for a couple of years. He is also the author of the popular *Introduction to Philosophy* and several other works. In the fifteen chapters of the book, the author's treatment of the important religions extant in India, China and Japan and the West has been fair and sympathetic. The study of religion, dogmatic and philosophical, has become prominent in the present decade and considerably important contributions, not excluding the psychological aspects, have been made by thinkers on the subject. A comparative study of religions based on deep study of the doctrines is gradually leading man to a more tolerant attitude towards other religions and in the long run, one may expect, religious and cultural distinctions to slowly disappear. This is, incidentally, an effect which may be fostered by a study of this very readable volume, though as the author himself recognises, 'we are not yet ready to develop a "world-religion" incorporating the virtues of all man's religions'. The author is of opinion that the present tendencies in religion will lead to two possibilities which may reinforce each other to a very great extent. The syncretistic tendencies will get greater importance and this may lead in the long run to a religious unity. The other is the comparative study of religions in a rational and scientific spirit which may unfold to us the ultimate nature of religion and how it fills man's needs. The latter movement is making good headway by the various historical studies and personal discussions carried on by the Harvard University, the Study of the Great Religious Movement and by the distinguished individual efforts of scholars, like P. T. Raju, John Wild and others. It is not too much to hope in the words of the leading note of the book 'that the divisions among the peoples of the world' may be erased and 'a communion of Sympathetic understanding, particularly in the spiritual realm', may be established, in a foreseeable future.

In the section on Hinduism Mr Bahm gives a kind of outline of the evolution of Hindu religious ideas, and discusses the four pathways to realisation — knowledge, action, meditation and devotion. After a rapid survey of Jainism and Buddhism, he discusses the theistic and the Advaita Vedanta. The practices of popular Hinduism are sketched with an emphasis on their inner significance. In the second part of the work we have an account of Taoism, Confucianism, Chinese Buddhism and Shintoism which the author describes as nature-centered religions. The treatment is a summary account of the history and the main doctrines. The third part deals with Judaism, Christianity and Islam and includes Humanism as one of the Western religions. Each chapter covers a wealth of details which enables us to view religion in its proper perspective. The book is scholarly and thorough and its cheep price should enable every student of religion and philosophy to study it with attention and care which it richly deserves.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

KANNADA

SANATSUJATIYA: By Swami Vijnananda. Pub.: Mangalore Trading Association, Pvt. Ltd., Mangalore-1. Pp. 120. Price Rs. 1.50.

Sanatsujatiya is a notable section in the *Mahabharata* discussing some of the deeper problems of life and death and it has been referred to by a number of commentators on the Scriptures. Purporting to be a dialogue between Dhritarashtra and Sanatkumara, it deals mainly with the question of Death. Is death real? Or is it only apparent? What is its nature? These are the questions of the king which are answered by the doyen of the Jnanins, Sanatkumara, at the instance of Vidura. Running into four chapters, the exposition analyses the origins of decay and death

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in Ignorance which brings about a veiling of one's true nature and object of life and leads to a series of deviations which culminate in death. The way out is to get at the delivering Knowledge. But this Knowledge is not to be found in the pages of any book but in the petals of the soul as they unfold themselves in the course of *tapasya*. Plenty of citations from the Upanishads and other sacred texts are found in these chapters and the editor-translator, Swami Vijnananda has drawn attention to them in his notes. He follows, generally, the interpretation of Acharya Shankara but does not hesitate to follow other Acharyas where he feels they are nearer the spirit of the work.

A useful addition to spiritual literature in Kannada.

M. P. PANDIT.

MALAYALAM

KUNTI (A STUDY): By Swami Siddhinathananda. Pub.: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Puranattukara P.O., Vilangan, Trichur, Kerala. Pp. 112. Price Rs. 1.50.

This book is a study of Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas. She was the embodiment of patience, fortitude and self-sacrifice. As a Kshatriya woman and mother of five heroes, her instructions to her sons — through a story called 'Viduropakhyana', one of the most important portions in the *Mahabharata* — not to accept humiliation on any account, is most fascinating and interesting.

The life and teachings of Kunti has been beautifully narrated in this book by Swami Siddhinathananda in simple, dignified Malayalam. This book gives the story of the *Mahabharata* also, in brief by and by. There is no doubt that this book will infuse a sense of duty in the minds of the readers. It can be prescribed, with great profit for the younger generation, for rapid reading in Malayalam in high school classes.

BR. PRASENAN.

MARATHI

SRI SRI RAMAKRISHNA KATHAMRIT (Part I — First Half): Transcribed and translated into Marathi by Swami Viswakarmananda. Pub.: Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Varanasi. Pp. 252. Price Rs. 2.25.

This is a new approach to the Master's Gospel. Here we find Sri Ramakrishna's own words as noted down by 'M' in Bengali transcribed into the Devanagari script with copious notes and translation into Marathi of words and idioms wherever they are not understandable by the Marathi readers, supplemented by English equivalents wherever there is still ambiguity in the meaning of the passages. All translation has been given in the footnotes. As the translator opines the purpose of the book is to present to the Marathi readers the subtle meanings of expressions that could not be fully conveyed in a translation, however able, as each language has some idioms almost untranslatable into any other language.

This should be a welcome edition for all those who know the Devanagari script and are desirous to read the Gospel of the Master in the original. We hope this part will be followed up by others.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS-4

REPORT FOR 1964-65

Sri Ramakrishna Math Charitable Dispensary completed 39 years of its useful service by the end of the year under report. The total number of patients treated during the year was 1,46,366 of which 50,803 were new, as per details given below:

Eye Department: New 3,412; Old 11.086; Total 14.498. No. of extra-ocular operations 152. No. of refractions 320.

E.N.T. Department: New 3,880; Old 5,960; Total 9,840. Tonsillectomies performed 28.

Dental Department: Extractions 1,815; Caries 2,526; Pyorrhoea 2,792; Total 7,133.

The rest were treated in the General and Homoeopathic departments.

571 patients were X-rayed and 25 patients were screened during the period under review. The Laboratory examined 726 specimens.

Milk was distributed to 2,625 under-nourished children during the period. 985 minor surgical operations were done and 19.582 injections were given.

The actual receipts in 1964-65 were Rs. 41,189.12 and expenses Rs. 46.570.81, thus leaving a deficit of Rs. 5,381.69. The management express their gratitude and thanks to all their friends, donors and sympathisers and appeal to the generous public for their continued assistance and co-operation.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4

SRI BUDDHA JAYANTI

On 23rd May, 1965 at 6-00 p.m. a public meeting was held at the Vivekananda Hall, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, to celebrate the birthday of Bhagavan Buddha. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the speaker, Mr W. S. L. de Alwis, Assistant High Commissioner for Ceylon in Madras, as also the gathering. Mr W. S. L. de Alwis spoke for about an hour on the life and teachings of Lord Buddha bringing out the salient points of his life and philosophy in an impressive manner. Sri S. K. Sivaraman proposed a vote of thanks

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... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

शून्यत्वमिति चेच्छून्यं मायाकार्यमितीरितम्। न शून्यं नापि सद्यादृक्तादृक्तत्त्वमिहेष्यताम्॥ ४९॥

Śūnyatvamiti-cet, if it be said that it (Māyā) is of the nature of void; *māyākāryaṁ,* the projection of Māyā; *śūnyamiti,* of the nature of void; *īritaṁ,* it would be as good as stating. *Na śūnyam,* neither void; *nāpi sat,* nor real; *tattvaṁ,* category; *yādrak,* of what type; *tādrak,* of such nature; *iha,* in the case of Māyā; *iṣyatāṁ,* be it accepted.

49. If it be said that (Māyā) is of the nature of void, it would be as good as stating that all the projections of Māyā also are void. But let it be known that nature of Māyā is of such a category which is neither void nor real.[1]

[1] Maya's nature is different from both real and unreal, hence cannot be described. Compare sl. 109. of *Vivekachudamani.*

सन्नाप्यसन्नापि उभयात्मिका नो भिन्नाप्यभिन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो।
साङ्गाप्यनङ्गापि ह्युभयात्मिका नो महाद्भुताऽनिर्वचनीयरूपा॥

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं किंत्वभूत्तमः। सद्योगात्तमसः सत्त्वं न स्वतस्तन्निषेधनात्॥ ५०॥

Tadānīṁ, then (prior to creation); (Māyā was); *asat,* non-being; *nāsīt,* was not; *sat,* being; *na āsīt,* was not; *kintu,* but; *tamaḥ,* of the nature of darkness; *abhūt,* was; *sadyogāt,* because of its conjunction with Reality; *tamasaḥ,* to the darkness; *sattvaṁ,* (came the semblance of) existence; *tat-niṣedhanāt,* that being refuted; *svataḥ,* by itself; *na* (*sattvaṁ asti*), (it has) no (existence).

50. Then (prior to creation) Māyā was neither of the nature of non-being nor being; but was of the nature of deep darkness. This darkness too was (said to have) existence because it was in conjunction with Being (*sat*) and not that it had an existence by itself.

NOTE: The first line in the text is a reference to the Nāsadiya Sūkta of the Rig Veda (10: 11. 130).

(*Continued on page* 182)

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CONCEPT OF A WORSHIPFUL BEING

For ages now the controversy as to the nature of a worshipful Being is going on. Some say that He is infinite, absolute, without form, eternal, and is inconceivable by the human mind. Others have contended that He is of infinite good qualities, that He has form and though He is all-pervading, He has an abode of His own. Some others again say that He cannot be said to be absolute and infinite, yet He is self-surpassing; yet others give Him a definite form and assert that He can be none other and all other gods are only lesser than Him. Simultaneously a section of humanity has held that there is no such Being at all. It is all a superstition of the frail human mind, of weak persons and should be got over. In the recent centuries this latter view has been gaining ground.

Scientists in the beginning, in the West, were the first to raise the banner of revolt against the then prevailing form of religion and theology there. For the Church at that time, put down, with a firm foot, whatever went against their theological beliefs. Science, therefore, for its very survival had to stage a great fight. Later when the scientists got a free rein to explore their field and ultimately found that science alone could not give peace to mankind, and when contacts with the different religions made it possible to know what was meant by real religion, they discarded this inimical attitude to religion. Nevertheless, the lesser men who call themselves scientists who have as yet contributed nothing either to science or to their own countries are furiously fighting the lost battle. Here, we shall not concern ourselves with these people but limit ourselves to understand the controversy cited at the beginning of this article and enlighten ourselves whether such a controversy is worth the trouble.

II

It is first of all necessary to know as to how this idea of a Being superior to man came to be conceived of in the beginning. The first feeling man experiences, when he comes to know of things, is that he is bound. In the beginning man might have felt the immensity of the power of Nature, of the elements and therefore personifying them worshipped them, so that they may be propitious to him. So there came to be the worship of the sun, the earth, the fire and water. The earth was worshipped, when man came to depend on cultivation. It was propitiated in order that it may yield crops in plenty. Man felt that these were more free than him and would grant him freedom, when propitiated. Swami Vivekananda says: 'If we try to examine the various sorts of worship all over the world, we would see that the rudest of mankind are worshipping ghosts, demons and the spirits of their forefathers. Serpent worship, worship of tribal gods and worship of the departed ones, why do they do this? Because they feel that in some unknown way these beings are greater, more powerful than themselves, and limit their freedom. They therefore seek to propitiate these beings in order to prevent them from molesting them, in other words, to get more freedom. They also seek to win favour from these superior beings, to get by gift of the gods what ought to be earned by personal effort.'[1] So, we can say that this idea of a superior being or beings originated with the bondage man felt — the moment he began to look around — and the freedom he hankered after; a superior being he thinks would give him unlimited freedom. Even in the crudest concept of God this idea is manifest. To quote Swami Vivekananda again: 'These two views (the ancestor worship and worship of Nature), though they seem to be contradictory, can be reconciled on a third basis, which to my mind is the real germ of religion, and that I propose to call the struggle to transcend the limitations of the senses. Either,

[1] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I. pp. 332, 333. Seventh edition. 1946.

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man goes to seek for the spirits of his ancestors, the spirits of the dead, that is, he wants to get a glimpse of what there is after the body is dissolved, or, he desires to understand the power working behind the stupendous phenomena of nature. Whichever of these is the case, one thing is certain, that he tries to transcend the limitations of the senses. He cannot remain satisfied with his senses; he wants to go beyond them.'[2] Later as man evolved and began to think deeply, the idea of God also evolved. God came to be conceived of as a Person, sitting somewhere in the heaven infinitely merciful, infinitely kind, who showers blessings on the good. Many gods gave place to one God, omniscient, and omnipotent. In other words Monotheism became prevalent. Now, most of the religious can not go beyond this idea, though there are indications in their scriptures which point to higher and nobler sentiments.

Well, as it is, it is not bad; we need not blame them. But when they pose to be all-knowers, and dogmatic and begin to condemn every other thought, every other sentiment, every other religion as only worth to be consigned to the dust heap, or flames, we have to pity them for their shallowness; for they are as Christ said: 'Eyes have they but they see not; ears have they but they hear not.'

Further, by these condemnations they not only expose their intolerance of a second creed or religion, other than their own, but also express lack of depth, lack of sympathy, lack of sensitivity, and fear to go beyond the limitations set by themselves. Let us remind ourselves that these are not things of the past, but of the living present. Dogmatism and fanaticism die hard. If one goes through some of the recent publications of the West and subsequently reproduced in India too, one will find how patent this fact is. Hinduism and India have again become the target of vested interests both in and outside India. This is a thing which cannot but be noted in passing though a detailed survey of it is not necessary in this context.

Now to return to our subject: This idea of a Personal God residing somewhere in the heaven was all right for the common masses but the Hindu seers were not satisfied with such a position. They persisted in their search and advanced further. They said, 'Well, God has an abode but he has an abode in us too, in everyone of us. Nay, we are his parts. Nature also is a part of Him. Just as man has a soul and a body, the whole universe and all the living and non-living beings are his body and He is its soul.' Here people still held on to a Personal God.

But there were seers who were not yet satisfied with the idea. Swami Vivekananda explains why they were not satisfied: 'This explanation — that there is a Being beyond all these manifestations of Māyā and who is attracting us towards Himself, and that we are all going towards Him — is very good, says the Vedanta, but yet the perception is not clear, the vision is dim and hazy, although it does not directly contradict reason. . . . The idea that the goal is far off, far beyond nature, attracting us all towards it, has to be brought nearer and nearer, without degrading or degenerating it.'[3] The sages, therefore, indomitably struggled on until they came to the last word of Vedanta — Non-dualism, the idea of One without a second. 'The God of heaven becomes the God in nature, and the God in nature becomes the God who is nature, and the God who is nature becomes the God within this temple of the body, and the God dwelling in the temple of the body at last becomes the temple itself, becomes the soul and man — and there it reaches the last words Vedanta can teach.'[4] This idea, however, is beyond the grasp of most people. If any one says 'You and I are Gods,' or Ātman is Brahman, the ordinary man will be shocked at — what he considers — this blasphemy. It is a thought too deep for most of mankind. They

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 59. (1948)

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 128.

[4] *Ibid.*

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will either make a hash of this idea or will simply try to ridicule it. So, we see that every man wants whatever he considers as true to be accepted by everyone else. But we must ask ourselves, when we propound a theory, specially about religion and God : What right have we to condemn others or force them to accept our opinions? Fanatics have no patience to reflect upon this. They will either ask you to follow their pet theories or suffer the consequences. In olden days it was the sword but now it is abuse and vilification. We do not know, how God, who is supposed to be all-love, can remain where so much hatred is rampant.

III

Now, we have so many concepts of God. Which concept is true? What is the way out of this labyrinth of concepts? What must a common man follow? Were the great sages all-wrong? If they were not, whom should one follow? is the common man's dilemma. But to the Hindu, if he had studied his own scriptures, heard his Masters with attention and faith, this should be no problem at all. Even as early as in the times of Ṛg Veda our sages found out that 'Truth is One but sages call It variously, as Indra, Varuna, and the like.'[5] By whatever name one called that Supreme Being it was one and the same. Later too we find this idea being again and again repeated and stressed. In the *Bhagavad Gītā* Sri Krishna says, 'One who worships Me (the Lord), in whatever form, to him I come in that form. For, O Arjuna, all people travel everywhere in my path alone.'[6] A poet sang, 'Men take different paths, straight or crooked through different tendencies, yet, O Lord, Thou alone art the ultimate goal of all men, as ocean is of all rivers.'[7] Sri Ramakrishna by his intuitive realizations verified this truth and then in his homely inimitable style said: 'Just as water drawn from the different places of a tank by people speaking several languages is variously named, as 'jal', 'pāni', 'aqua' and water, so according to the distinctive tendencies of man, he addresses God, as Brahman, Allah, Krishna, Kali and the like.'

So, it is wrong to be dogmatic about any one concept of God. Those who insist that God can be only what they consider Him to be are consciously or unconsciously dictating terms to God. In what a predicament should that God not be! Do they not consider this overlording Him? If God were such a weak person as to listen to the dictates of a community however large and powerful, He would be no better than the tribal gods conceived of in earlier stages of man's history. Yet, why do people persist in their self-righteous notions? In one word, if we have to say, they are not at all perturbed about God. They are concerned with all other things except Him. So there is conflict and quarrel, dispute and bloodshed, on the outer forms, and modes of worship.

Before dealing with the question, what is the path which one has to choose from among so many concepts, we have to consider one's own nature. Man is man because he can think, why then should he be reduced to the position of dumb driven cattle? The constitution of each man is different. No two persons are exactly alike even in physical appearance. Man comes into this world with loads of tendencies and never with a *tabula rasa*. The very fact that beings are born, say the Indian scriptures, is due to the momentum of past actions or Karma, and accordingly are their temperaments formed. The Hindu scriptures speak of three *gunas* or constituents of Nature, viz. *sattva, rajas,* and *tamas,* and according

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[5] इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान्।
एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः॥
—*Rig Veda*, 1. 22. 165. 46.

[6] ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः॥
—*Bhagavad Gita*. 4. 11.

[7] रुचीनां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव॥
—*Shivamahimnastotra*, 7.

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as any of these constituents is predominant the nature of man is tranquil, active or inert. For 'as is one's nature so is one's faith. And man's character develops according to his faith, therefore as is his faith so is man'.[8] If man has to make real progress he should be allowed to develop in his own way according to his own nature. What another man can do, if possible, is to give him a helping hand in his own way and never by interfering with his ideal or condemning what he has cherished. If one cannot do that and if one is still solicitous for the welfare of that person, what best he can do is to keep off that person's track. What Sri Ramakrishna taught by reprimand and instructions to 'M', the writer of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, can be studied with much benefit towards our spiritual growth. 'M', who had imbibed the idea that image worship is not a proper mode of worship, at the beginning of his contact with the Master came forward to argue that though God may have form, yet 'Certainly He is not the clay image!'

MASTER (*interrupting*): 'But why clay? It is an image of Spirit'.

'M' could not quite understand the significance of this 'image of Spirit'. 'But, sir,' he said to the Master, 'one should explain to those who worship the clay image that it is *not* God, and that, while worshipping it, they should have God in view and not the clay image. One should not worship clay.'

MASTER (*sharply*): 'That's the one hobby of you Calcutta people — giving lectures and bringing others to the light! Nobody ever stops to consider how to get the light himself. Who are you to teach others?'

By Calcutta people the Master means people who are imbued with the modern ideas. Man will do more harm than good by such interference. Sri Krishna says in the Gita, 'Do not create confusion in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to work. For a wise man should encourage them in all work by steadily engaging himself in work.'[9] By working in an unselfish manner, without any motive man's mind gets purified and in a purified mind values of things become more and more clear until he comes to know the true nature of things. Similarly whatever a person's idea of God may be, he will, if he is sincere, come to the Truth. That is why Sri Ramakrishna said: 'He who is the Lord of the Universe will teach everyone. He alone teaches us, who has created this universe, who has made the sun and moon, men and beasts and all other beings. The Lord has done so many things — will He not show people the way to worship Him? If they need teaching, then He will be the Teacher. He is our Inner Guide.'

IV

What is, therefore, required of man is sincerity and yearning to know God, to see Him. Have we that yearning? Then we are on the right path. Do we do our spiritual practices regularly and systematically? Then there is hope that we shall one day see Him, that we are surely making progress on the path though we may not be aware of it. But mere book knowledge and parrot-like repetition of scriptures will avail us nothing, take us nowhere. It cannot show us God. The Hindu scriptures openly and boldly avow this: 'Neither by expounding (of scriptures), nor by ratiocination nor by reading a great many Texts can this Ātman be attained. It is attained by him who seeks Him alone. Such a one's soul is illumined by the light of the Lord.'[10] A great significance is attached

[8] सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।
श्रद्धा मयोऽयं पुरुषः यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥
— *Bhagavad Gita*, 17. 3.

[9] न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तस्समाचरन् ॥
— *Ibid.*, 3. 26.

[10] नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा
विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम् ॥
— *Mundakopanishad*, III. ii. 3.

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to the words 'Him alone'. It will not do to seek God as one among the many things you desire. It is no seeking at all. One should seek Him and Him alone. And this means that there should be no other thought in the mind and no other word in the speech except about Him, and no other deed but that which is dedicated to Him. And this should be done not for a day or a year but till realization comes. Can such steadfastness and one-pointedness be attained all of a sudden? By long, continuous and regular practice one gets a little concentration. How much of practice is then not necessary to have this desire to seek 'God alone'! He only truly worships who worships in this manner. Such a person attains Light no matter what form or ideal he worships. Attaining Light himself he becomes a light unto others. So it is not only the concept of God that brings man Light but his devotion to that concept. Swami Vivekananda said that that age will be an ideal one when each person will pursue his ideal of religion alone without any interference whatsoever from anywhere.

Let us understand this thoroughly and shed all inimical attitudes towards other sects, other religions and pursue our own paths with steadfastness and devotion, remembering at the same time that hatred and fanaticism will not lead us anywhere near God. On the other hand, it will take us away from Him. Study the lives of the saints and sages and find out one from among them who had attained that state by hating others. God is all-love. So if we have to worship God we should also become all-loving. Then and then alone our worship will be fruitful.

PANCADASĪ — (*Continued from page* 177)

अत एव द्वितीयत्वं शून्यवन्न हि गण्यते। न लोके चैत्रतच्छक्त्योर्जीवितं लिख्यते पृथक् ॥ ५१ ॥

Ata eva, therefore; *śunyavat*, as in the case of a non-entity; *dvitīyatvaṁ*, a secondness; *nahi gaṇyate*, is not acceptable; *loké*, in the world; *caitra-tacchaktyoḥ*, of Chaitra (a person) and his power; *jīvitaṁ*, life; *pṛthak*, separately; *na likhyate*, (are) not written.

51. As there is no existence for Māyā separate from Brahman, so, like void which cannot be counted as a second entity, Māyā too cannot be accepted as a second entity with reference to Brahman. In the world the life history of Chaitra and that of his power cannot be separately written.*

* If Chaitra and his power were two entities two separate life histories could have been written about each, but not being so that is an impossibility; similarly about Māyā, nothing positive can be said without reference to Brahman and hence it is not a second entity — that is the meaning.

The Blessed One said: 'Who is an outcast?

'An outcast is the man who is angry and bears hatred; the man who is wicked and hypocritical, he who embraces error and is full of deceit.

'Whosoever is a provoker and is avaricious, has evil desires, is envious, wicked, shameless, and without fear to commit wrong, let him be known as an outcast.

'Not by birth does one become an outcast, not by birth does one become a Brahman; by deeds one becomes an outcast, by deeds one becomes a Brahman.'

— From *The Gospel of Buddha* by PAUL CARUS.

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HOW TO BECOME SPIRITUALLY AWAKENED

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

SITTING at the feet of the great disciples of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the religion that we learnt taught us not to be ego-centric, but to be dedicated to the service of the Lord in man. Some words of Swami Vivekananda come to my mind always. From America he wrote, and these were also the last lines in his reply to the Madras address, 'First let us ourselves be gods and then help others to be gods'. Swamiji put this idea before us in another form : each one of us should lead our life in such a way, that we attain to our spiritual realization, freed from all bonds. Not only that, we must also be able to promote the welfare of others. The ideal is, that in the innermost core of our being, we have to realize the God-head ; again, we have to experience Him as manifest in all. Out of this realization of his have come into existence all the various forms of service of the Ramakrishna Movement : Medical Service, Educational Service, Preaching and Publication. The ideal is to serve the Divine in others. Just as we ourselves try to be free we should also try to help others to be free.

Before I begin the talk I would like to read to you some passages from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.

A DEVOTEE : "Sir, is it necessary to have a Guru ?

MASTER : "Yes, many need a Guru. But a man must have faith in the Guru's words.....

"One should constantly repeat the name of God. The name of God is highly effective in the Kaliyuga. The practice of Yoga is not possible in this age, for the life of man depends on food. Clap your hands while repeating God's name, and the bird of your sin will fly away.

"One should always seek the company of holy men. The nearer you approach the Ganges, the cooler the breeze will feel. Again, the nearer you go to a fire, the hotter the air will feel.

"But one cannot achieve anything through laziness and procrastination. People who desire worldly enjoyment say about spiritual progress : 'Well, it will all happen in time. We shall realize God sometime or other.'

"It is said that, in the Kaliyuga, if a man can weep for God one day and one night, he sees Him.

"Feel piqued at God and say to Him : 'You have created me. Now you must reveal yourself to me.' Whether you live in the world or elsewhere, always fix your mind on God.

"Go forward. The wood-cutter, following the instructions of the holy man, went forward and found in the forest sandal-wood and mines of silver and gold ; and going still farther, he found diamonds and other precious stones.

"The ignorant are like people living in a house with clay walls. There is very little light inside, and they cannot see outside at all. But those who enter the world after attaining the knowledge of God are like people living in a house made of glass. For them inside and outside are light. They can see things outside as well as inside.

"Nothing exists except the One. That One is the Supreme Brahman." *

WHY DO WE NOT MAKE PROGRESS

As in our worldly affairs so also in the world of the Spirit there must be systematic practice. We all must be able to prepare ourselves, so that we may be in the proper mood to follow the spiritual path. Many of you might know this story : Sri Ramakrishna had a great disciple, Saint Durgacharan Nag — Naga Mahashaya as he used to be called. His father was very much attached to him, and again the old man used to do a lot of 'Japa'. Once when he was told, 'Your father is a great 'devotee', Naga Mahashaya replied, 'What can he achieve ? He is so much attached to me. An anchored boat does not move'. There is a story behind this saying. Some drunkards, one moon-lit night, took it into their head to go on a boat-ride. They

* *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 179, 180.

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went to the Ghat, hired a boat, sat at the oars and started rowing. They rowed and rowed and rowed, the whole night. Early in the morning, when the effect of the drink was gone, to their surprise they found they had not moved an inch. 'What is the matter? What is the matter!' they asked. They had forgotten to raise the anchor.

I hear constant complaints from people, 'We are doing our spiritual practice, but we do not make any progress'. The reply is here. At the time of your spiritual practice, are you able, at least to some extent, to free your mind from worldly matters and give your purified mind to God? That is the point. We need training in all paths. Some of you might have read Swami Vivekananda's Jñāna Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Rāja Yoga. Whatever path one may follow, one needs discipline, proper training of the mind and creation of the proper mood. If the mind is trained and the mood is created, one can carry on one's spiritual practice with great success. Our trouble is: In worldly matters we may follow some method, but in spiritual affairs we are like children. I have seen grown-up people and big officials talking like children. So an inner personality is to be built up. Many of us are persons but have no personality. We are individuals, but have no individuality. Through moral practice, through fulfilment of duties, through regular worship, a spiritualized personality is to be built up. It is then that our spiritual practice becomes fruitful. Our prayers and meditation will prove to be a source of great blessing. I repeat, in all the paths, in all the Yogas, disciplines are necessary. If I follow Karma Yoga, my mind must be comparatively calm. I must try to be detached from the things of the world and from the fruits of my Karma. I must try to dedicate the work to God. If I follow Bhakti Yoga, I must have a great yearning for God. It is a spiritual hunger that cannot be appeased by anything in the world. Through prayer, through Japa, through meditation and ultimately through Divine contact, the spiritual seeker appeases this spiritual hunger and finds Peace and Bliss in Divine realization. Many want to follow Jñāna Yoga, but the mind is to be trained so that it can follow the path of extreme self-analysis — 'I am not the body; I am not the mind; I am not the ego nor the senses; I am the spirit.' Our teachers of Jñāna Yoga say: one must have perfect dispassion for enjoyment, dislike for any future life and power to discriminate between the real and the unreal. One must have mental discipline. One must have infinite faith (Śraddhā) in the Supreme Spirit. One must be able to practise concentration.

When Concentration Becomes Beneficial

Let us remember one point. Many people say, 'Oh! I am not able to practise concentration'. Knowing the persons, that their mind is not pure enough, I say to them 'It is good that you don't have concentration'. If an impure mind gets concentrated, it becomes like a bombshell. Aren't we concentrated when we are angry, when we are full of hatred and jealousy? That concentration is no good. It is actually dangerous. So an amount of spiritual discipline is necessary. In the path of Yoga, Patanjali speaks of Yama and Niyama. You have to practise these disciplines as much as you can. One cannot be established in the spiritual life all of a sudden.

Ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha (non-dependance on others' charity) are the first disciplines; Niyama — which consists chiefly of Śaucha, purity of body and mind, Santosha, contentment — has to be developed. If one is always grumbling and complaining, can one with such a mind ever do anything successfully either in this world or in the world of spirit? No. We must adjust to the things in this world and try to improve ourselves.

Tapas: There should be an amount of austerity in life. Without rigour in spiritual practices, each generation is becoming softer than the previous one. Nothing can be achieved by these soft people.

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SWADHYAYA : We study books. Does anything enter our mind ! We hear a lecture and say it was wonderful ; and when asked 'what did you hear ?' we would not be able to repeat anything. The words enter through one ear and pass out through the other. They are not retained. Swādhyāya means to reflect on what you study. Make it a part of your own. 'Śrotavyaḥ' : First you hear or read, then you have to reflect on what you have heard or read, i.e. 'Mantavyaḥ'. That is the way. When we are established in the moral path, to some extent, then we will surely get the benefit of spiritual disciplines.

ASANA : You may sit like a statue for many hours ; what do you get ? Pretty nothing. At least there should be spiritual aspiration ; then your sitting posture helps you in your spiritual practice.

PRANAYAMA : In the practice of Prāṇāyāma you stop your breath. What do you gain ? If it is merely a physical phenomenon, a football bladder then must be a great Yogi. What do you get by it ? Nothing by itself. But when the mind is greatly disciplined, when the mind is in a spiritual mood, Prāṇāyāma helps one to rise to a higher plane of consciousness.

PRATYAHARA is detachment. From everything the mind is to be detached. When you are attending to some work you banish all other thoughts and give your mind to that particular object. If you fail to practise detachment you invite worries. When you go to sleep, and think of too many things, you don't get sleep, you suffer from insomnia and fall ill. The mind is to be detached from all things at will.

Similarly if you wish to meditate, what should you do ? Detach your mind, as much as you can, from the things of the world ; even from the pictures, the thoughts and the feelings that arise within you. But detachment should not create a vacuum in your mind. A vacant mind will fall asleep. Be wide awake. Take the name of the Lord and meditate on Him. Then there would not be any fear of falling asleep. Instead the mind will rise to a higher plane.

DHARANA : Fix your mind on some divine theme and that is Dhāraṇa.

DHYANA : Fix the mind on a holy word or on a holy blissful form — that is a step to attain to what is called Dhyāna or contemplation. You remain absorbed in Divine Consciousness and that leads to the higher state, the superconscious state.

But before we proceed we will ask ourselves a question and that is very vital. We identify ourselves with the body and think that we are men and women. We worship a certain Deity — Male or Female. We begin our spiritual life that way, and end also in that way ; what do we gain ? At the very beginning of our spiritual life, it is essential on our part to be conscious that we are all souls. The Ātman, the spiritual entity, has become bound by ego, bound by the mind, bound by the senses, bound by the body. This Ātman is to be freed.

WORSHIP OF GOD

What then is worship of God ? What is the conception of God ? In Europe a devotee said to me 'Swami, never utter the word "God". It calls up our childhood image, viz., there is one beyond the clouds, in the Heaven, ever eager to punish those who break His laws. I cannot think of that'. I said, 'All right, use the word Īśwara. I use the word Brahman'.

If we wish to worship God we must feel our nearness to Him. In a way He is the Creator, the Protector and the Destroyer. He takes things back to Himself, which we call destroying ; but He is much more than that, He is the Soul of our souls, nearer than the nearest, dearer than the dearest. He comes to us as Father and Mother. He comes to us as the Guru and He comes to us also as Iṣṭa Devatā — the deity chosen for worship. According to the dualistic Vedanta, and most of us should start as dualists, the soul and the over-soul — the Ātman and Paramatman

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— are ever connected. They are ever in union; yet owing to the impurity of our mind, we become attached to the Lord's creation but not to Him. A great western Psychologist, seeing the ways of ordinary religious people, once remarked, 'People do not want God. They want to use God!' They want to pray to God so that He may grant all their prayers and if He does not grant these prayers, some become sceptical and say "Oh, God does not exist, and even if He exists, He is deaf, He is blind, He does not respond". That kind of childish conception is no good. Again you want only the good God, as if He has no other task but to grant you boons.

You know, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna worshipped the Supreme Spirit, first in the form of Kali, a representation of The Cosmic Process. Mother with one hand is creating; with another hand She is protecting; with the third hand She is destroying; and with the fourth hand She is holding the decapitated head. This is the formal representation of what one of the Upaniṣadic seers said. The disciple asked the father '*adhi hi bhagavo brahmeti*', 'Master, tell me about Brahman.' And the father replied: 'Brahman is that out of which all things come into being, by which all things live and unto which all things go back.' In our Bhakti Śāstras we call it Īśwara, 'God' and in Vedanta we call it Sat-Chit-Ānanda. He is Infinite Existence, He is Infinite Consciousness, He is Infinite Bliss. He dwells in our soul and is the Soul of our souls. Again, we all dwell in Him. We must feel it, at least His nearness. But even if we cannot feel it, we should try to develop the consciousness that He is nearer than the nearest, dearer than the dearest. What is it that obstructs this consciousness? Our desires stand in the way of this spiritual awareness. So let us try to purify this mind.

Here you come across a big problem. It is the impure mind that runs after the things of the world. The pure mind naturally reflects the glory of God, moves towards Him, meditates on Him, tries to feel His Divine Presence, Love and Bliss. How to purify the mind? First of all you must avoid evil thoughts, evil feelings, evil actions, as much as you can. Entertain good thoughts, good feelings and perform good actions. That is the first step. We should always bear in mind that we are all souls, Ātman. This Ātman has put on a human personality, with a view to play a part in the Cosmic drama of life. Whatever be the part that is assigned to us, that part has to be played well; That means, we have to perform the duties of life and work in a spirit of detachment, as a form of service to God. But mere moral practice and the fulfilment of duties are not enough to purify the mind; we have to meditate on Him, pray to Him who is the Infinite Source of purity, of Knowledge, devotion, compassion, Love and Bliss.

Here we come to the question: How to worship God, how to pray to Him? But the conception of God is too vast. I give an illustration: We are like small bubbles. The ocean is too big for our conception. So what should we do? We find some mighty waves; let us move towards them, attach ourselves to them and in course of time we have an idea of the ocean itself. Similarly, we start our spiritual journey with one such mountain-like wave, our Iṣṭa Devatā, we just worship Him, pray to Him, then we come to have a broader conception of life and broader conception of Reality. The Iṣṭa Devatā tells us 'Look here. I may be a mighty wave, you may be a small bubble. But all of us have got the infinite ocean behind us'. When the proper time comes, He reveals to us the highest Truth.

Is A Guru Essential

Now, we read in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, a devotee asking, 'Sir, is a spiritual teacher necessary?' Sri Ramakrishna replied that it is necessary for many. If there be some unique souls, born with divine consciousness, who feel the Divine presence even from their very childhood, they do not need a spiritual teacher, but all others do need. Once a devotee asked our teacher Swami

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Brahmananda — and I have been telling many of you to read, if you have not done so, *The Spiritual Teachings of Swami Brahmananda* — 'Maharaj, is a Guru necessary?' and the Swami smiled and said, 'My boy, even if you want to be a thief, you need a teacher. How much more should there be the necessity of a teacher when you want to know the highest truth!' You know there are gangs of pickpockets; they have to pass through a tremendous discipline and training and then only one can be an expert pickpocket.

In this connection, I wish to tell you a story: Girishchandra Ghosh, the actor and dramatist and a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna used to practise Homoeopathy in his old age. Taking the name of the Master he would give medicine. He had naturally tremendous intuition to achieve success in his way of treatment. One day an elderly and very decent-looking gentleman was sitting by his side, when a young man came and said, 'Sir, I have lost my wrist watch on my way'. The other gentleman became inquisitive and asked, 'When and where did you lose it?' He said, 'Sir, I lost it at such and such an hour, at such and such a place', and the man said 'You will get it back'. How could he give the assurance? Because, the fine-looking gentleman was one of the leaders of the pickpockets, one of their Gurus.

I give you another instance. You want to learn Astronomy; you take a book and try to understand it; you get precious nothing! But the Astronomer says something astounding. Every day you see the sun rising and setting and here comes a man who says the sun never rises; the sun never sets; it is all due to the movement of the earth. If we believe our sense perception fully, we do not pay any heed to him. But if we do not, we have to go to him, study under him, make experiments, and then we really convince ourselves what we have seen is an illusion and it is just the truth that the sun never moves, the earth moves.

A spiritual teacher also comes and says something astounding. We are all conscious of our body. We think we are all men and women but the spiritual teacher says that we are the Spirit, distinct from the body and distinct from the mind and distinct from the ego. But if you think as many think, 'he is a cheat', Lord bless you! But if you doubt sometimes, 'Am I this mass of flesh, this mass of filth or is there something living in me, something living in everybody?' If you start thinking like that, your spiritual life begins. I go to a teacher who has been following the spiritual path all his life, has attained illumination, has come to possess a tremendous sympathy, love, compassion and kindness. I sit at his feet, learn from him something of spiritual disciplines and do my spiritual practices regularly. As my mind becomes purer and purer, I get something in the domain of the spirit and my Iṣṭa Devatā becomes living. I feel within me a presence that permeates my being, a presence that permeates everybody.

I will tell you a story. In the Upaniṣads we come across '*Nārada Sanatkumāra Samvāda*', a discourse between Narada and Sanatkumara. Saints are not born perfect, they have to manifest their perfection. Through *sādhana* they unfold their potentiality. Saints and sages do not drop from the sky. Narada had his period of true studentship, studied all branches of learning, studied the scriptures, sciences and arts. But having mastered the subjects, he found something was lacking in him. He had studied many things but had not known himself. We all are quite content to read and know of the outer world but we forget to know even a bit of ourselves. It is most unscientific. A great Western physicist has said, 'That to which Truth matters must have a place in reality, whatever be the definition of reality'. Without some knowledge about the subject, education is incomplete. Our world is full of half-educated people, of those who don't know themselves, who don't know anything of the higher Reality, but pose to be teachers or saviours of the world. Such persons are about to destroy the world. Now,

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let us come back to the anecdote : 'Narada felt "I am not an Ātmavit".' He felt a deep pain. He says, '*Soham bhagavo śochāmi* — (I, who have not known the Reality in me, am in great sorrow). Please remove my sorrow. Take this sorrow away from me. Give me peace.' The Guru listened to him with infinite tenderness, took him step by step, helped him to have a finer and finer mind and ultimately revealed to him the Truth. '*Yo vai bhūmā tat sukham nālpe sukhamasti* — That alone which is infinite is bliss. There is no Bliss in the finite.'

How to Purify Our Minds

Our trouble is that our soul longs for infinite joy, infinite love, infinite bliss. But we want, we try to find that in the finite and if we don't succeed we feel frustrated. The Guru said, 'If you want real joy, unbounded joy, you have to reach the Infinite'. So the question was : What is meant by the Infinite ? It is that which is everywhere — above, below, to the right and to the left. But how to reach it ? Here the great ancient teacher Sanat-Kumara gives us in a nut-shell the whole course of spiritual discipline, *āhāra śuddhau sattva śuddhiḥ, sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ, smṛti lambhe sarva granthīnām vipramokṣaḥ.* Food should be pure. When food is pure, our nature becomes pure, and when nature becomes pure, mind becomes pure, and when the mind becomes pure, we remember our spiritual nature. Gradually we are established in spiritual consciousness and that is emancipation. That is freedom when the Self-Consciousness (Divine) has dawned, when we have realized the Infinite Spirit. Once that is done, one feels oneself one with the Infinite Spirit, and all bonds drop off. Let us now try to understand the meaning of *āhāra* : *āhāra* is what we take. Does it mean pure food ? Pure Sattvic food ? Pure vegetarian food ? How far does it help ? It helps a little ; but unless you know how to purify the mind, nothing happens. There are plenty of wicked people who are vegetarians. What type of vegetarians are they ? Lord bless them ! You feed a poisonous snake with the purest of milk. It will manufacture poison, won't it ? So something of our poisonous nature is to be discarded. Therefore, Shankara observes : 'All right ! you take pure food, but that is for the nourishment of the body. But the food that you take through the eye, through the ear, through the senses and the mind, all that food also should be pure. Then, your nature becomes pure, the subtle body becomes pure, and then comes illumination.'

Some of you might have seen the three Japanese monkeys ; you know, one monkey is closing both the ears, another both the eyes and another the mouth. During my stay in Europe, in Switzerland, I came across a stone-carving on the beach of the lake on which Geneva is situated. It was in a small town. There also there were the three monkeys, but with this difference, one had only one eye closed, another had only one ear closed and the third had half of the mouth closed. I was taken aback for a moment. I thought : 'What is this ?' Then came in a flash. I understood the meaning, 'Don't see what is bad ; see what is good. Don't hear what is bad ; hear what is good. Don't say what is bad ; say what is good.' First I thought it was an original idea. Then my mind turned to the Upaniṣads. There is a text, a peace chant : *Om bhadraṁ karṇebhiḥ, śṛṇuyāma devāḥ, bhadraṁ paśyemākṣabhir yajatrāḥ, sthirairañgaistuṣṭuvamsastanubhiḥ vyaśema devahitaṁ yadāyuḥ.* 'Let us see what is 'Bhadra' — good. Let us hear what is 'Bhadra'. Let us sing the glory of the Divine Spirit.' That is to be done. And, when you have done that, to some extent, the mind becomes pure. Make the best use of your vocal organ. You may make bad use of it saying some awful things. Don't do it. Take the name of the Lord — any Name that appeals to you. Meditate on any aspect that appeals to you with an amount of devotion. After some time you will find, your mind is becoming pure. The Divine Name, the Divine Form, uplifts you. Later on, you may even have a glimpse

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of your Iṣṭa Devatā, a glimpse even of the universal Spirit.

What is Japa and Where is One to Meditate

The Infinite Spirit is there but we cannot reach it. We must follow a path that helps us to reach That, higher and higher, step by step. I want to reach the snow-capped mountains; can I jump and reach it all at once? No. Swami Brahmananda says in his *Spiritual Teachings*: 'You want to reach the roof. Do you jump to the roof? No. If you do, you fall down and break your legs. Go step by step.' So Japa, as the Master has been saying, is one of the most efficient means. But Japa is not to be done like a parrot, *tajjapastadartha bhāvanaṁ*. As you repeat the Divine Name, do the *Artha-Bhāvana*. What is *Artha-Bhāvana?* Dwelling on the meaning. First of all, let us think of the Luminous, Blissful Form of the Lord i.e. the Iṣṭa Devatā. Then think of Him as an embodiment of Infinite Purity, Knowledge, Devotion, Compassion, Love and Bliss. Then think He is no other than the Paramātman — the all-pervading Spirit dwelling in all beings.

We are asked to meditate in the 'Lotus of the Heart'. Where is this Heart? Is it the physiological heart? We cannot do anything there. It is the consciousness that is in the Heart, the consciousness that permeates my entire body and mind. It is the consciousness of the Ātman, the consciousness of the Paramātman. We have to meditate in this Chidākāśa. We have to think of ourselves as the devotee, and think of the Iṣṭa Devatā as the manifestation of Paramātman.

Swami Brahmananda used to tell us, "As you do your spiritual practices, you understand what is meant by the word 'Heart'. First you may think of it as the 'Mahākāśa', external space; later, you may think of it as the cosmo-mental world." The real heart is in the Chidākāśa, in the realm of pure consciousness. In that, the soul, the unit of consciousness, is eternally united with the Infinite Spirit. So you have to meditate on the Iṣṭa Devatā in the inner world.

It is good to have a picture. Gaze at the picture; watch the picture. But it is much better to install your picture, the Holy form, in your inner world. Then you are not to depend on anything outside. Whenever you want, look within where your Iṣṭa Devatā is seated, and pray to Him. Repeat His Divine Name; meditate on Him; first, it may be on His Form, then on His attributes, next on His infinite nature. That is how one is to progress.

Let us go back again to the Yoga aphorism of Patañjali, already referred to, wherein he tells us how to do japa viz., *tajjapastadartha-bhāvanaṁ*. Now if I repeat the Lord's name and meditate on Him, what will happen to me? The Teacher says, "*tadartha-bhāvana* — Think of the meaning — the contents, the connotation of the word." What happens if we do that? Obstacles are removed and new spiritual consciousness awakens. Now with the help of Japa and simple Dhyāna, obstacles are removed. Psychologists have explained this in a remarkable way. We are always manufacturing worries and anxieties, always manufacturing evil thoughts. These evil thoughts sicken our mind and sicken our body. The more we think of holy thoughts, the more we repeat the holy harmonious sound and the more we meditate on the blissful Form of the Lord, the more the mind is set in abundant harmony. Illnesses, self-created, self-manufactured, drop off. Then harmony is established in the mind. This harmony reflects itself on the body. So, to some extent physical health and mental health improve with the repetition of the Divine Name and we come to know the power of the Divine Name. With the power of meditating on the holy Form, a new spiritual consciousness that was lying hidden, that was potential, manifests itself. Then we discover that we are not just these personalities but we are all souls; and the Iṣṭa Devatā is no other than the Paramatman, the source of all Peace, source of all Bliss, the

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source of all Love. Such is the power of the Divine Name.

What is Dhyāna? We talk of meditation. You say 'I am meditating'. What are you meditating on? Going on brooding over something or other? That is not what is implied by the word Dhyāna. Dhyāna is: when as you think of the Lord, you become absorbed in the Divine thought. But this absorption would not come all of a sudden. The Japa we do is a step towards that. Repeat the Divine Name, think of Him, and the mind becomes a little calm. Even the sound drops off. You go on thinking of Him. Then, when God or the Iṣṭa Devatā becomes more real than the things of the world, naturally the mind gets absorbed and you gradually get a taste of the Divine Presence, Love and Bliss. He may come to us in the form of the Iṣṭa Devatā; as the Supreme Spirit, as Sat-Chit-Ananda, i.e. Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Love, Infinite Bliss. This is what happens if you undergo regular spiritual practice.

In the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* the Master has said, 'You must have spiritual yearning'. Spiritual yearning is like hunger. When people ask me 'Why should I meditate?' I say in return, 'Why should you? Don't do it.' But if you had the yearning born in you, you would have come to know what spiritual hunger is. Then you could not but think of God, you could not but pray to Him, you could not but take his Divine Name and think of His glory. This hunger is to be awakened. This hunger is to be maintained. That becomes possible if you do your spiritual practice regularly. You feed the body with material food; you feed the mind through study, with thoughts. But you actually starve the soul in the midst of plenty. Do you not feel starved? The soul yearns for the Infinite Spirit; it yearns to realize the Divine Presence, Love and Bliss infinite, and we do not satisfy the yearning. But when that is done, a new life starts.

The Master has also said that holy company is necessary, company of those who are following the spiritual path, who help in strengthening us in the spiritual path, who reflect something of the Divine Glory, which we also wish to realize. That is necessary.

Follow the Right Path: Begin from the Beginning

Again the Master said, 'One must follow the right path'. Suppose I am thrown in the wilderness. If I follow one path, what happens? I enter the wilderness more and more. If I follow another path, I come out of it. I am reminded of an American story. A motorist was driving at break-neck speed. He wanted to reach a certain place. He asked a school boy who had studied a little geography: 'My son, if I go this way, shall I be able to reach the place?' 'Yes Sir,' said the boy, 'You will reach it.' 'How far is it this way?' asked the motorist. 'Sir, you will have to go 25,000 miles' replied the boy. 'If I go the other way?' 'Then only two miles' was the answer. Do you follow the idea? By one path, you have to come round the world to reach the place. If you go the other way just two miles. Through proper mood, through proper attitude, if you follow the proper directions you reach the goal soon, progress is quickened. A tremendous change takes place within you. But don't try to quicken your steps too much. Go slow, but with determination, along the right path. Gradually you shall reach the highest truth. But, as I said in that illustration of climbing the snow-capped mountain, proceed step by step.

So in our spiritual practice, first comes 'Pratima Puja', i.e. worshipping the Lord in some aspect with the help of a form, a symbol, a picture, or an image. Next, the repetition of the Lord's Name, thinking of Him and singing of His glory. Later on as I said, the mind gets a little absorbed; you feel the Divine presence. That is Dhyāna, and Dhyāna leads to the highest goal, the highest realization. In order to move, we should proceed step by step. So the Master says, 'Go forward, step by step; from the sandal wood, come to the

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silver mine, come to the gold mine and then come to the diamond mine'. Similarly, if we sincerely follow the spiritual path and begin from the beginning, we will reach the Truth. But, if we begin from the end, we reach nowhere. Some want to practise Advaita *sādhana*. I tell them, 'I know nothing of Advaita *sādhana*; go to some other teacher.' But if you want to begin from the beginning, I can tell you something of it.

So, first of all, begin with the form-aspect. I have *dehātma-buddhi*, body consciousness, I am an embodied being. I am a person amongst persons. How can I think of the Infinite Spirit? I can't. So let me begin as Maruti said. Hanuman was asked by Śri Rama 'How do you think of Me?' Hanuman said: 'Lord, when I consider myself as a personality bound by *dehātma-buddhi* i.e. as an embodied being, I think of myself as Your servant and You as my Master; and Lord, when I think, I am a soul distinct from the body and mind, I consider myself as a part and You as the whole. But at other moments, my Lord, when I rise above all limitations I think You are myself and I am Thyself.' So let us begin from the beginning.

Sri Ramakrishna is very practical. He speaks to us of three types of *ānanda*: *vishayānanda* i.e. the *ānanda* that comes to us through the contact of the senses with the sense objects; *bhajanānanda*, the *ānanda* that comes to us through *bhajana*, through Japa, through Dhyāna; and then finally comes *brahmananda* as the result of the realization of the Infinite Spirit. In spiritual life let us have as much *bhajanānanda* as we can. It is within the reach of all of us. The *ānanda* that comes to us through Japa, through Dhyāna of the Blissful Form of the Lord — let us have that. And as we have it, let us try to share this Ānanda with our fellow spiritual seekers. That is why, when devotees with such a spiritual outlook meet together, they repeat the Lord's Name, sing His glory. At least for the time being they forget the troubles of the world. The mind is transported to a higher plane, something of the *ānanda* of the Supreme Being, something of the peace of the Supreme Spirit comes into our soul, but as I said, we should not stop with that. Our great teachers used to tell us always, 'as you advance, you help others to advance'. One who is illumined can alone be the real teacher; but in order to be of service to others one need not be at the beginning fully illumined. Now, I may be a student of a senior class and when teachers are lacking I can take one of the lower classes, I can be of service to those who are in the lower class. Let us not wait for fullest illumination. At every stage it is possible for us to be of service to our fellow beings.

The highest ideal, as Swami Vivekananda has said, is this: First let us ourselves be gods and then help others to be gods. If we advance to some extent, we can help others also to advance. Here comes the ideal: *ātmano mokshartham jagaddhitāya cha*, 'To work for our own illumination and spiritual emancipation and at the same time to render service to others.' As we improve, we also help others to improve. There is a wonderful prayer. We have it in the *Universal Prayers*: *Durjanah sajjano bhūyāt. Sajjanah śāntimāpnuyāt, śanto muchyeta bandhebhyo, muktaścānyān vimocayet*, 'Let the wicked become virtuous and the virtuous attain peace — tranquillity. Let the peaceful and tranquil attain illumination and freedom. Let the free help others to become free.' Let us do it in our own humble way. As we do our spiritual practices, as we progress in our spiritual path, let us try to be of service to others. So, my own individual spiritual practice and service to others — these are the two-fold ways which will help me to attain inner purity, which will help me to attain Divine Presence, Divine Love, Divine Bliss. There is the whole of this ideal before us, and let us proceed, each one in one's own way, towards this truth, step by step; let us be sure of every inch of the ground. And as we do our spiritual practice, let us not be ego-centric. Let us offer all the fruits of our labour to the Supreme Spirit.

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Sri Ramakrishna has said, 'If we move towards God one step, He comes towards us ten steps'. It is a fact to be realized in the world of Spirit. So proceed. The Lord will protect you. The Lord will guide you. The Lord, the Supreme Spirit, will fill your heart with Divine Presence, Purity, Love and Bliss.

Let us all offer our salutations to the Supreme Spirit, who dwells in the hearts of us all. He is the Supreme Principle of Existence, the Supreme Reality, the Supreme Light and the Supreme Self. Out of this infinite, all-pervading Spirit we all have come into being; in that we rest and unto that we return. Let us for a few moments meditate on the Infinite Spirit. Let us do it each in his own way. Let us try to feel something of the Divine Presence, Divine Love, and Divine Bliss. May the All-pervading, All-Blissful Divine Spirit, the Soul of our souls protect us all. May He guide us all. May He nourish us all. May He bless us all. May the teachings that we learn become fruitful and forceful through His Grace. May peace and harmony dwell amongst us all. Om Shantih, Om Shantih, Om Shantih.

Oh! Lord, all spiritual paths are like streams leading to Thee, the one ocean of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Thou art our Mother. Thou art our Father. Thou art our Friend. Thou art our Comrade. Thou art our Knowledge. Thou art our Wealth. Thou art Oh Lord! our all in all. From unreality lead us to Reality. From darkness lead us to Light. From death, lead us to Immortality and Bliss. Reach us through and through—Oh Lord! May we find Thee in our heart of hearts; May we discover Thee in all our fellow-beings. May we love Thee and serve Thee in all. May we thus realize the highest goal of human life. Om Shantih, Om Shantih, Om Shantih.

THE ROLE OF IDEALS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS: THE CONCEPT OF DHARMA

P. NAGARAJA RAO

THE Upaniṣad declares that the nature of a man is created by the nature of his thoughts. 'According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does one become. The doer of a good deed becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by evil action. Others, however, say that a person consists of desires. As is his desire so is his will; as is his will so is the deed he does; whatever deed he does, that he attains.'[1] The *Gītā* affirms that the nature of a man is determined by his faith. 'The faith of every man is in accordance with his natural disposition. Man is of the nature of his faith; what his faith is that verily he is.'[2]

Human life gains in significance and ardour when faith in ideals governs it. An ideal is a fundamental aspiration, which is realizable, but not yet realized, difficult but not impossible of achievement. It requires honest efforts of man and stern discipline to attain. It is attained through the exercise of man's freedom and his right choice. It is not automatic. We cannot reach it in a mechanical escalator. It does not grow like grass. It has strong forces opposing it, e.g. physical force, social pressures, and lurid temptations to human lust. One has to fight. It also implies sacri-

[1] यथाकारी यथाचारी तथा भवति — साधुकारी साधुर्भवति, पापकारी पापो भवति; पुण्यः पुण्येन कर्मणा भवति, पापः पापेन। अथो खल्वाहुः काममय एवायं पुरुष इति; स यथाकामो भवति तत्क्रतुर्भवति, यत्क्रतुर्भवति तत्कर्म कुरुते, यत्कर्म कुरुते तदभिसंपद्यते ॥

— *Brihadaranyaka Up.*, IV. iv. 5.

[2] श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः।

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fices of one's comforts and props and indulgences. Human life acquires a status only if it is lived in the light of a creed or an ideal and a code of conduct.

Faith is a total commitment of our life to an ideal. The ideal we cherish must not seek to fly away from life and its realities. It must look at life steadily and see it whole. It involves the disciplining of the unruly desires, wavered impulses and strong emotions that shake and shatter us. The ideal must not be an 'antique' to be kept in the case of a museum. The ideal cherished must not be a passing thought or an occasional whim entertained. It must be fixed. It must claim total acceptance at our hands. When we say that the ideal must be fixed, it should not become inert as a statue. The ideal must be a living one exercising wide influence and pervading all the aspects of life. The ideal must not become a fixation or obsession resulting in the making of a maniac or a fanatic. A man must possess the idea but the ideas should not possess him. The ideal should be the servant of the spirit, to dominate the lower nature and bend it to the service of the higher. The ideal should influence character. 'Ideals shape character and living and makes the thought productive.' The "ideal" holds the equilibrium of society,[3] holds up the scales of justice[4] and regulates man's life. It is the principle of integration which makes for peace, harmony, and happiness. This ideal comprehensively called Dharma is taught in all possible ways by precept and example, through stories and tales, in literature and art, in the temples and on the stage, through the living examples of saints and *avatāras*. The ideal is the cement of society, the bond of love and the chief means for the attainment of God.

In a revealing verse with powerful insight Manu observes: 'If one should make peace and live in harmony with Yama (the Principle of *dharma*) residing in the hearts of men, there is no need to go to the holy Ganges, or Kurukshetra for purifying ourselves.'[5] The need to cherish the ideals and live in their light is the goal of human life. The one great ideal put forth by the contemplative saints and sages, and the classical poets and thinkers of India is the ideal of Dharma. Adherence to the principle of Dharma brings in its trail all the good things of life. Towards the conclusion of the great epic *Mahabharata*, the compassionate assertion of Vyasa is 'I cry out with uplifted arms, but none listens to me. Out of Dharma comes wealth and the gratification of legitimate desires, yet why is it not followed?'[6]

[3] धारणात्धर्म इत्याहुः धर्मेण विधृताः प्रजाः ।

[4] धर्म एव हतो हन्ति धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ।

[5] यमो वैवस्वतो देवो यस्त्वेष हृदि स्थितः ।
तेन चेदविवादस्ते मा गङ्गा मा कुरून्गमः ।

[6] ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्विरौम्येष न कश्चिच्छृणोति मे ।
धर्मादर्थश्च कामश्च स किमर्थं न सेव्यते ।
— *Mahabharatha*, Svargarohana Parva, 5. 62.

Everyone can see the sky, even the very worm crawling upon the earth sees the blue sky, but how very far away it is! So it is with our ideal. It is far away, no doubt, but at the same time, we know that we must have it. We must even have the highest ideal. Unfortunately in this life, the vast majority of persons are groping through this dark life without any ideal at all. If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand. Therefore, it is better to have an ideal. And this ideal we must hear about as much as we can, till it enters into our hearts, into our brains, into our very veins, until it tingles in every drop of our blood, and permeates every pore in our body. We must meditate upon it.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

SUSANTA DE ALWIS

THE usefulness of all religions in the world today, and the urgent necessity for the peoples of this world to live a spiritual way of life cannot be over emphasized. We are living in a period of history when the whole of mankind is on the brink of total annihilation, at a time when certain Heads of States are preparing themselves and gearing their countries to a war-footing owing to fear, distrust and hatred of other countries. If we are to create the atmosphere of total peace, not merely the absence of war but the conditions under which we can co-exist in the understanding that all 'isms' have the common objective of the welfare of mankind, we should strive to create the defences of peace in the very minds of these statesmen. The only way by which we can establish these bastions of peace is by spiritual upliftment of ourselves and our leaders which in turn can only be done through religion.

'Of all the teachers in the world the Buddha was one who taught us most to be self-reliant, who freed us not only from the bondages of our false values but from dependence on the invisible being or beings called God or Gods. He invited every one into a state of freedom which he called Nirvana. All must attain it one day and that attainment is a complete fulfilment of man,' said Swami Vivekananda speaking about the Buddha.

The late and revered Jawaharlal Nehru in his literary masterpiece, *The Discovery of India*, has described the Buddha in meditation in his own inimitable style :

> "Seated on the lotus flower, calm and impassive, above passion and desire, beyond the storm and strife of the world, so far away he seems, out of reach, unattainable, yet again we look and behind those still unmoving features there is a passion and emotion, strange and more powerful than the passions and emotions we have known. His eyes are closed but some power of the spirit looks out of them and a vital energy fills the frame. The ages roll by, but the Buddha seems not so far away after all; his voice whispers in the ears and tells us not to run away from the struggle but calm-eyed to face it and to see in life even greater opportunities for growth and advancement."

As I reflect on these two tributes I become humbly aware of the magnitude of the task which I have taken on myself, of presenting to you a glimpse of the life of this great Teacher, which will give you the background to an understanding of the fundamental tenets of the Buddha Dhamma.

In order to have a correct understanding of the life and teachings of the Buddha it is necessary to consider the conditions and the age in which he lived. The Buddha lived in the sixth century B.C., an era of great intellectual and social activity in different parts of the world. In India in the sphere of religion the Vedas still held great sway and the Brahmanas who were the custodians of this learning had become a hereditary priest-hood. Often these Vedic rites included animal sacrifice of a very cruel and revolting character. On the other hand, there were others who felt that man's natural attachment to worldly enjoyment and sensual pleasures prevented him from being mighty and powerful. They, therefore, resorted to austerity or self-mortification in its different forms to control the senses. Then there was another group which in their pursuit of the truth and mystery of existence, renounced home and family and engaged in meditation and self-development in the seclusion of the forest or as wandering mendicants. They did not believe in the extremes of self-mortification.

If one were to describe the situation, 'it was an atmosphere where religion was con-

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joined with speculative philosophy and where a spirit of broad tolerance which embraced many schools of thought' prevailed. Discussions centred on questions such as : Did the world have a beginning in time or was it eternal ? Was there a soul apart from the body ? What was it like and what happened to it after death ? Was there a condition under which one could live and yet not live ? It was to men deeply engrossed with such ideas as these that the Buddha preached a new gospel which in its essence was as follows :

'To live mastered by the body, he said, or to live totally neglecting the body is equally wrong. There is a middle way, the way of good life. The good life is to be one's best in thought and word, in will and deed.' This discovery he proclaimed to the world in unequivocal terms. He announced : 'Wide open are the portals of immortality, let those that have faith and courage come and share their faith. Happy is the solitude of him who is full of joy, who has learned the truth, who sees the truth. Happy is freedom from malice in this world — self-restraint towards all beings that have life. Happy is freedom from lust in this world, getting beyond all desires, the putting away of that pride which comes from the thought, I am.' This truly is the highest message.

Let us, therefore, now dwell on the life of the Teacher who brought this message into the world. I do not propose to go into the details of the early part of his life as you in India would be very familiar with it. I would summarise it briefly :

The Buddha was born on the full moon day of the month of May in 623 B.C. in Lumbini Park. His father was King Suddhodhana who was the Ruler of the Sakyas, a proud clan of Kshatriya warriors from the foothills of the Himalayas, with his capital at Kapilavattu. His mother was the lady Maya. She was on her way to her parents' home to give birth to the child when unexpectedly the baby was born under the shade of a flowering Sal Tree.

After his birth the Brahmins who lived as priests, astrologers and soothsayers in the King's court, read the auspicious marks on the child's body and predicted its high destiny. He was named Siddhartha which means the all-prospering one or one whose purpose has been achieved. Seven of the eight Brahmins predicted that the Prince will be a Chakravarti, a world emperor, or a wise teacher, supremely enlightened one. The one dissentient, Kondanna, said : 'Oh King, this Prince will one day go in search of truth and become a supremely enlightened Buddha.'

Queen Maha Maya, the mother, died on the seventh day after the birth of the child. The baby was thereafter nursed by his mother's own sister, Prajapathi Gothami. Although the child was brought up amidst all abundance and luxury, the father saw to it that his son received an education required of a prince. He became skilled in many a branch of knowledge and in the arts of war, easily excelling others. King Suddhodhana was, therefore, naturally proud of him but he had also reason to be concerned. His son was not like other children for he would often be found sitting alone in deep contemplation. It is recorded in the Texts that although only seven years old when he was taken out for the annual ploughing festival with its pomp and pageantry which he watched in the company of his own attendant-women, he forgot his surroundings and entered into a deep state of trance seated cross-legged. This experience provided the strength and hope for the Prince later in his search of supreme enlightenment. King Suddhodhana, in view of what the soothsayers had predicted, took every precaution to prevent his son coming to know the sorrowful aspects of life. He provided him with three palaces for the three seasons with all the earthly joys of life. Everything that could give him knowledge of human misery and death was carefully kept away from his sight. At the age of sixteen he was married to the beautiful Yasodhara whose hand he won in an open contest with the Sakya Princes.

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After marriage he expressed a desire to see the outside world. The king agreed but made all arrangements to ensure that wherever he went the streets and houses were decorated and that there was a spirit of gaiety and festivity among the people. At the same time the king made sure that the sick, the aged, the infirm, the blind and the maimed were kept away from his sight. But on one occasion when the Prince went driving with his charioteer Channa from the royal gardens he saw to his amazement what his eyes had never seen before — a man weakened with age and in the last stage of decay. This was the first shock the Prince received.

The second was the sight of a man with mere skin and bones utterly unhappy, smitten with disease, and strength gone from him.

On a third occasion he saw a group of persons bearing on their shoulders the corpse of a dearly beloved kinsman. The Prince began to have a glimpse of the woes of the world. The more he came in contact with the world outside of his palace the more convinced he became that the world was lacking in true happiness. From his charioteer Channa he learnt further that even he, his beloved Princess Yasodhara and his kith and kin, all without exception, were subject to ageing, disease and death.

The next incident that stirred him was a recluse moving with measured steps, calm and serene, one who had renounced his home to live a life of purity, to seek the truth and solve the riddle of life. He turned homewards in deep contemplation nursing the possibility of renunciation but before he reached home he heard that a son had been born to Yasodhara, a fetter to his immediate plans.

As he pondered over all these cruel realities of life, his determination to find a way out hardened. 'There is a getting born and a growing old, a dying and a being re-born. And from the suffering an escape is not known, even as from old age and death. How shall I escape? Surely there must be a way out of this mass of ill; just as there is warmth as opposed to cold, and light as against darkness, there must likewise be happiness as opposed to sorrow.' He was thus overcome by a powerful urge to seek and win the deathless, to strive for deliverance from old age, illness, misery and death — to seek it for himself and for all beings which suffer. Eventually, on the night of the full moon at the youthful age of twenty-nine he called Channa, his charioteer, to his side and riding his favourite horse, Kanthaka, left the palace and city unnoticed during the night to the banks of the river Anoma. Having cut his long hair with his sword and given over his princely clothes and ornaments to Channa, he bade him return and so began a long and tireless quest for knowledge that would lead him to the solution of the mystery of life.

For seven days he lived in solitude as an ascetic on the banks of the river Anoma. He did so because at that time many people in India believed that the way to happiness was by means of purification through asceticism and the more rigorous the asceticism the more thorough the purification. He came on foot to the city of Rajagaha begging his food from door to door. He first revolted against the sight of the mixture of hot and cold food but soon overcame it and took it merely to keep his body alive, to pursue his quest.

In his search for salvation he sought out famous teachers of religion of the time. He first went to Ālāra Kālāma and later on to Uddaka for advice. He acquired all the knowledge these teachers could give him, joining in their religious exercises which took him to the highest concentrative thought but there it ended. He realized that he was still far from his goal. Dissatisfied with anything short of enlightenment he declined their invitation to stay on and proceeded in his wanderings until he reached the thick forest near Uruvela and applied himself in solitude to the severest penances and self-tortures. Soon five other ascetics who admired his fortitude and endurance joined him. They were Kondanna, Bhadiya, Bhappa, Mahanama and Asija. For

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six long years he subjected himself to rigorous self-mortification to test the belief that purification and final deliverance could only be achieved by such practices. In the Majjima Nikaya it is stated that he lived on leaves and roots, steadily reducing all food. He wore rags from dust heaps ; he slept among corpses, or on a bed of thorns. The utter paucity of nourishment left him a physical wreck as he described himself, " like waste, withered leaves became all my limbs". After six years of struggle he came to death's very door but still found himself nowhere near the goal. It became abundantly clear to him from his own experience that self-mortification was not the way to enlightenment but undiscouraged he sought new avenues to reach his goal. He realized that with the body so weakened he could not take the road to enlightenment. He then abandoned self-torture and extremism, taking the minimum of food so as to sustain himself. His five companions were disappointed at this and left him. Having regained his strength he resolved to make a final effort in complete solitude with determination and faith in his own purity and strength.

On the full moon day of the month of May when he was 35 years old he sat down in the evening at the foot of a fig tree with a strong determination, "Let my skin, sinews and bones shiver and wither ; let my flesh and blood dry up. I will not step up from this seat until I have attained supreme and absolute insight." As he sat there he went through his final and most strenuous struggle, the struggle against the inclinations and desires of the human heart. Indolence and pride, delusion, love of the world, craving for existence and enjoyment, fame, power, wealth, love of family life and all the delights and joys presented themselves to him in their most seductive forms. But he, cross-legged, sat there in perfect concentration, alert and strenuous and applied himself to the mindfulness on breathing gradually, cleansing his mind of all impurities and desires. He gained the knowledge of recollecting past births, gained the divine eye and beheld the disappearing and re-appearing of being in good stages of existence and in stages of war, each bearing according to his deeds. Then he applied his mind to the acquisition of the knowledge of destruction of the corruptions.

His struggle was crowned with success. He tore asunder the veil of ignorance and sensed the truth thus becoming the Buddha, the awakened one. He realized the truth of universal suffering, the truth of craving being the cause of sorrow, the truth that there is a state where sorrow is completely extinguished and happiness reigns and the truth that there is a way that leads to the conquest of suffering. He had found emancipation. His destiny had at long last been fulfilled.

The wondrous being who became the Buddha was indeed yet a man. In fact, as Buddhist writers have repeatedly pointed out, it is this essential humanity of the Buddha that shines out most perfectly through the canonical records of his life and activities. He lived with the people proving by his personal example that what he had become, they could, every one of them, become themselves and that we are all of us potential Buddhas. According to the teachings of Buddhism, there is in each one of us the germ of the Buddha ideal in different stages of development. It is this humanity that is the most striking thing about the Buddha. For forty-five years till his death at Kusinara at the age of 80 in 553 B.C. on the full moon day of May, his life was one of frequent activity, teaching and preaching, continuously travelling on foot, carrying the message of happiness to all those who would care to hear.

Now I propose to place before you the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Before we consider the fundamental teachings of Buddhism I should like to invite your attention to the oft-posed question, " Is Buddhism a religion or a philosophy ? " Dr. G. P. Malalasekera has very lucidly answered this question. He says,

> Some prefer to call it a religion, others a philosophy. In fact, it is both. In it the most lofty

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religio-moral doctrines are united with the deepest philosophical truths to form one integrated whole. It enlightens its followers as to the nature of the universe and the laws reigning therein; it discloses to man the essence of his being, shows him his true, higher destiny, extending beyond the fleeting earth-life, awakens his slumbering moral forces and faculties, kindles in him a desire for the good and noble, teaches him to be humane, patient, and unselfish, gives him consolation in sorrow, confidence at the moment of death and declares to him the way that leads to the highest emancipation from unrest, sorrow and suffering to perfect peace, supreme happiness and consummate emancipation. Thus, Buddhism is a religion.

It is likewise a philosophy. It demands of its adherents belief only through a conviction gained and confirmed by one's own investigation and examination and by earnest reflection. Its doctrines are not based on the will of an incomprehensible god, creator, or a supernatural revelation but on the natural constitution of the world and on the laws of life which are open to all to discover for themselves, should they so desire. It does not seek to frighten the evil-doer by threatening him with eternal punishment. It seeks rather to clear up the eye of the erring one, obscured by earthly delusion, so that he may be able to see the truth. It leads the honest struggle on the way to spiritual development and moral self-perfection up to a standpoint where everything transitory lies behind him as unsubstantial appearance and where prejudice, doubt and illusion disappear in the light of knowledge. It is thus a philosophy in the best sense of the word.

He proclaimed for the first time the Dhamma in a discourse called the Dhamma Chakka Pavatanna Sutta (the foundation of the kingdom of righteousness) at Isipatana, the Deer Park near Benaras to the five ascetics who had at one time practised self-mortification with him. This discourse is universally known as the Four Noble Truths and contains the essence of the Buddha's doctrine in a most lucid form. I can do no better than to quote the Four Noble Truths as proclaimed by the Buddha in his first discourse-:—

There are two extremes that he who strives for deliverance should avoid. One extreme, the craving for the satisfaction of passions and other pleasures of the senses, is vulgar, base, degrading and worthless. The other extreme, exaggerated asceticism and self-mortification, is painful, vain and also worthless. Only the Middle Path which the Tathagata has found, avoids these two wrong ways and opens the eyes, bestows insight, and leads to wisdom, to deliverance, to enlightenment, to Nirvana.

It is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, right views, right aspiration, right speech, right deeds, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness, right concentration.

Now, this is the Noble Truth of Suffering:—

Birth is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering; sorrow, grief, lamentation, pain are suffering; union with unpleasant things is suffering; separation from the beloved is suffering; unsatisfied desire is suffering; in short the whole five groups of clinging are suffering.

Now, this is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering, namely, verily it is this thirst, this craving for existence, and enjoyment, which leads to rebirth; seeking satisfaction now in this way, now in that. It is the craving for the satisfaction of the passions, the craving for existence in this life or hereafter, and the craving for not to be what one dislikes.

Now this is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering, namely, verily it is the complete destruction, conquering, annihilation of these cravings.

Now this is the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering: Verily it is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely: right views, right aspiration, right speech, right deeds, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness, right concentration.

It is fundamentally the teaching of emancipation. Emancipation must needs imply the existence of evil from which men must be freed. Both facts are equally important as he said it: "One thing do I teach and one only — suffering and the extinction of suffering. The two are inseparable. They are complementary."

If you reflect on the substance of his first sermon, you will notice that it does not for instance give any account of the creation of the world. No promise is held out for exemption from pain and evil in return for prayer or ritual or sacrifice nor any favourable intercession by the divine powers. Without proclaiming himself a Saviour, willing and able to take upon himself the sins of mankind, he declares that each man and woman must bear the burden of their own evil actions. He

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categorically affirms that no God, even, can do for any man that work of self-conquest and self-emancipation which in the teaching of the Buddha stands for salvation.

Buddhism, therefore, is neither optimistic nor pessimistic but on the contrary teaches all truth that lies mid-way between them. He perceived the universality of sorrow and did prescribe a cure for this universal sickness of humanity. At the same time he did not expect his followers to be constantly brooding over this fact and lead a miserable and unhappy life. He exhorted them to be always happy and cheerful ; for joy is one of the factors of enlightenment. Buddhism is saturated with a spirit of free inquiry and complete tolerance. It is a teaching of the " open mind and the sympathetic heart ". The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding — the Sammaditti. To the seekers of truth the Buddha says : " Do not accept anything on mere hearsay ; do not accept anything by mere tradition ; do not accept anything on account of mere rumours ; do not accept anything by mere supposition ; do not accept anything by mere inference ; do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your preconceived notions ; do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable ; do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is to be respected by us. But when you know for yourselves these things are involved, these things are blame-worthy, and so on, then indeed do reject them." When a Buddhist worships an image he does not do so expecting worldly favours but pays homage to what it represents. When an understanding Buddhist offers flowers and whilst doing so in a spirit of homage to one whom he respects, he also appreciates the comparison, that like the flower which fades, the body is also subject to decay. Similarly, when he lights a lamp which dispels darkness he thinks of the Dhamma which lights the way to enlightenment. Buddhism appeals more to the intellect than to the emotion. It is concerned more with re-shaping the lives of the devotees than with their numerical strength. It must be said to its credit that throughout its peaceful march of 2,500 years no drop of blood was shed in the name of religion, no monarch wielded the sword to propagate the Dhamma and no conversion was made either by force or by any repulsive methods.

Apart from the four Noble Truths and the Noble Eight-fold Path, the doctrine of the Karma and re-birth is another essential teaching of the Buddha.

I am sure there must have been many an occasion when you would have yourselves asked, why the world is full of inequalities ; why is it that one should be inferior and another superior ; why should one be born rich and another poor ; why is it that some people should be born blind, deaf, deformed, maimed and die young while others are strong and healthy and live to the age of 80 or 100.

These questions, I submit, are satisfactorily answered by Buddhism. This variation has often been attributed to heredity and environment. It cannot be denied that they are partly instrumental but they are not totally responsible for those distinctions and differences that exist among people. Heredity perhaps explains only the similarities but what of the differences. Heredity for instance, cannot give us a satisfactory explanation why one of a noble family should be a criminal or why one in a poor family should turn out to be wealthy and honoured. According to Buddhism, these differences can be explained as due not only to heredity and environment but also to our own Karma or in other words, to our inherited past actions and present deeds. The Buddha himself explained this in reply to an inquiry when he said : " Every living being has Karma as its own, its inheritance, its cause, its kinsman, its refuge. Karma is that which differentiates all living beings into low and high states. Inherent in Karma is the power of producing its due effect, the cause produces the effect, the effect explains the cause ; the seed produces the fruit ; the fruit explains the seed as both are inter-related." According to Buddhism, there are three factors necessary

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for the re-birth of a human, i.e. the formation of a foetus in the mother's womb. They are the female ovum, the male's sperm and the Kāmmic energy, Vega. This Kāmmic energy is sent forth by a dying individual at the moment of his death to a new mother's womb ready for conception. "As long as this Kāmmic force exists, there is re-birth, for beings are merely the visible manifestation of this invisible Kāmmic force. In death the organic life ceases but the Kāmmic force which hitherto actuated it has not been destroyed." Birth is, therefore, preceded by death and death is preceded by birth. As a Western writer puts it: "Whether we believe in a past existence or not it forms the only reasonable hypothesis which bridges certain gaps in human knowledge concerning certain facts of every-day life." Psychologists, psychiatrists, medical men and hypnotists have conducted experiments in over 45 cases from fourteen different countries where previous births were recalled and they have been forced to admit the doctrine of re-birth as the only scientific explanation. I refer you to the researches of Dr. E. L. Stevenson and Professor C. J. Ducasse. I quote the Ven. Nyanatiloka Thero: "What is called the character of man is in reality the sum of the sub-conscious tendencies produced partly by the pre-natal, partly by the present volitional activity of Kamma. These tendencies may during life-time become an inducement to wholesome and unwholesome volitional activities or Kamma by body, speech or mind." If, however, this thirst for life is fully extinguished then there will be no new re-birth. This doctrine of re-birth should be distinguished from the theory of reincarnation or transmigration because Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging or eternal soul.

The other essential teaching which I would like to refer to is the Buddha's conception of Nibbana. This process of birth and death continues *ad infinitum* until this Kāmmic force is transmitted so to say to Nibbana — the ultimate goal of a Buddhist. Nibbana is the Pali version of Nirvana. It means the extinction of lust, hatred and ignorance. Nibbana is not to be found in any place nor is it a sort of haven where a transcendental ego resides. It is a state which is dependent upon the body itself, it is an attainment which is within the reach of all, it is attainable even in present life. As Edwin Arnold attempts to describe it: "If any teach Nibbana is to cease, say unto them they lie; if any teach Nibbana is to live, say unto such they err."

The way to Nibbana is a positive way of conduct, a life of extreme physical and intellectual exertion, till one attains that freedom beyond which there is no further. Such a positive code of conduct surely then cannot lead one to a negative state. The tendency, however, is to regard Nibbana as a negative state because no one could point it out. That Nibbana is something positive is amply testified by the Buddha's own words: "There is 0 disciples, a state that is not born, not produced, not created, not compounded. Were there not 0 disciples, this state not born, not produced, not created and not compounded, there would be no possible exit for what is born, produced, created and compounded."

From this we can, therefore, conclude that there must exist a sorrowless and deathless Nibbana which is opposed to the sorrowful and changing Samsara. "Nibbana is nothing but a state which is to be experienced and it exists not before it is experienced, nor does it exist once one has completed that experience."

As you will readily appreciate, it is not possible for anybody within a short space to lead you into a full and complete understanding of this deep and rich doctrine of the Buddha. What I have attempted is to place before you certain essential teachings as it strikes my mind, to provide you as it were, food for thought for a further study of the Dhamma which you can yourselves read, understand, verify and then accept, as the only way to supreme enlightenment.

May all beings be happy.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

LATU MAHARAJ continued: 'The Lord's sports are so wondrous that there is no release even in losing oneself. After losing, there is a start for refinding — refinding in an ampler space with plenitude in and around, plenitude of power and sweetness, of splendour and beauty. Take, for example the waters of the river: Does their cycle come to an end with their merging in the ocean? Are they not transformed into vapour by the sun's heat, do they not climb up again into the sky, and again come down to the earth? The beauty of *sādhana* is also like that. Once the *sādhaka* loses himself in the Lord; the Lord then, if He so pleases, finds him out and puts him on the way to refind himself transformed— this game of losing and refinding is — may be — never-ending. It never gets stale, it never tires the *sādhaka*; newer, sweeter, grander experiences urge him on and on. *Sādhana* thus is unending, the powers that urge one on are infinite. But whose *sādhana*? Whose are the powers? Of the Ātman, of course, which is infinite in more ways than we can conceive of.' Biharibabu, who was all concentration, asked him, 'Maharaj, if this be the mystery of *sādhana*, what is the use of losing oneself and again of finding oneself out?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'It is the Divine sport. It goes on like that. There is no logical "why" in that. The sportive Lord plays His game. In the game of hide-and-seek touching the granny completes one game for the player. But he can play again when the granny winks him on. The peculiarity of this game of *sādhana* is that it is the granny, the Lord Himself, who has become the players as well as the granny. He Himself is playing these parts — He is undergoing spiritual *sādhanas*, He tastes the release from bondages and again does He accept bondages anew; and in these self-imposed bondages He shows paths to freedom to others. Simply inconceivable are His sports! Nobody can understand an iota of this, if He Himself does not will it. Here His grace is all in all, from beginning to end.'

From the above we can surmise Lātu Maharaj's way of *sādhana* clearly. He did not like merely to remain immersed in the Ocean of Brahman but wanted to join in the Divine sports as well. This explains his double mood during this period. Sometimes he was seen inert as a log of wood — altogether lost to the outer world and to himself. At other times he was a merry minion, joy jetting out of him in all directions. In one mood he was experiencing that, 'Brahman alone is real, everything else is unreal'. In another mood he was feeling palpably, 'He has become all these'. We find, scattered throughout his talks, statements bearing out both the moods.

Mahendranath Datta writes in his pamphlet on "Lātu the Anchorite": 'For some time Lātu Maharaj was really in that state where a man could say he was in the world but not of it. He could not mix with anyone as before. He was, throughout the good portion of the day, found sitting quite absent-minded. His mind would not function in the normal way. At that time in all matters 'yea' and 'nay' were both the same to him. For none had he hatred, slight or contempt, or attachment, love or affection; for none had he a curse or blessing; there was neither welcome to nor rejection of anything of the world. At that time the world was to him a revolving wheel through whose holes things were seen hazily unattended by the mind. He was in a state of "stupor", so to say.'

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Below is what Navagopal Ghosh states about Lātu Maharaj: 'At one time Lātu Maharaj used to come to our house. A look at him would give this idea to anyone that all his transactions with the world were over. He had no personal desires nor any duty to anyone. He had no relish for food when it would come, nor did he feel any want or suffering when it would not. A glance at him would convince anyone of his absolute desirelessness.'

In 1893 Girishbabu said to one devotee, 'If you want to see a monk as described in the *Gītā* go and see Lātu'. He did not know what 'a monk as described in the *Gītā*' meant. So he asked what that meant, to which Girishbabu replied, 'You have not read, I see, the second chapter of the *Gītā*, where it describes the state of one whose intellect is fixed (on the Reality). The full description of the *Gītā* you can see demonstrated in his personality.' Saying this he explained all those verses of the *Gītā* to him. (Narrated by Avinash Chandra Ganguly.)

In 1893-94 what a devotee saw of Lātu Maharaj has been described in the pages of the *Udbodhan* by Swami Siddhananda. Biharibabu echoed it in the pages of the *Basumati*. Siddhananda writes: 'A devotee, an eyewitness said, "At that time he (Lātu Maharaj) would tie some dry gram in the corner of his towel and keep it dipped in the waters of the Ganga — the idea being that he could take the grains when they, soaked in water, would become soft. One day he had put the gram as was his wont tied in a piece of cloth and placed on it a piece of brick. It was ebb-tide then. Sometime after the flood-tide set in. Absorbed in his meditation, he was unaware of it. When he came to his normal consciousness he found the river in full flood-tide. His gram! There was no knowing if the towel was swept away. He sat still. What else could he do? When the tide was gone he found his piece of cloth and gram exactly where he had kept it. He picked it up and started eating".'

The following incident is from his own lips: 'One day I was sitting absent-minded on a boat loaded with straw. The crew did not notice me. When the boat weighed anchor I did not know. When it crossed Dakshineswar I became aware of the situation. At my request the crew helped me and I got down. When returning, I went to the temple garden and brother Ramalal fed me sumptuously.'

There is another incident of this period, similar to the above. He narrated it to a devotee. 'I used to pass the whole of the noon at a bathing place near the Snaneswara and nights at Prasanna Kumar Tagore's. At 11 p.m. or so I would climb the terrace of the *chāndni* and meditate and count beads.'

The devotee asked: 'What did you do when it rained, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Why, near the *ghat* there used to be many empty railway wagons; I would get into one. When the rain would stop I would get down. Once it so happened that I got into one wagon and did not know when it was dragged away by the engine. Next day a number of porters were asking me to leave the wagon. I asked them where I was. They said, "At Chitpore". What to do? I had to walk up to the Bāghbazar *ghat*. Since then I left entering a wagon. When it rained I would get down from the terrace and take to a corner of the *chāndni*. The constables at the *chāndni* knew me and would not trouble me.'

Mahendrababu writes: 'This state of nonchalance of Lātu Maharaj lasted for two years and a half. After that he attained abiding peacefulness. Serene gravity and sweetness became a permanent feature of his personality. In broken Bengali interlarded with his Chapra *patois*, he used to give out new thoughts and sentiments. They were rich in their depth and variety.'

It appears that seven or eight years after the passing away of the Master Lātu Maharaj had his *nirvikalpa samādhi* a second time. From his own words we are led to guess it. He once said to a devotee: 'Don't think if a *sādhaka* experiences *nirvikalpa samādhi* he can have it

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any number of times or whenever he wants it. There are many *sādhakas* who have tasted it but once. There are many more who could not reach it even once in the whole span of life. His grace on me is unending. So after making me labour for it for eight years only He graciously lifted me up to that state again. One day I was seated on the bank of the Ganga, when I saw an effulgence coming out of the waters of the river. It went on growing in size till at last it filled the sky, the earth, and the intervening space. Inside that infinite effulgence there were numberless other effulgences. As I was looking on I lost myself completely. I did not know what happened next. When, however, I returned from that wondrous region I remained in an infinite ecstatic joy. O the joy! It cannot be expressed in words. The heaviness of heart that I used to feel continuously after the passing away of the Master vanished into thin air, never to return again. Everything seemed to be soaked to saturation in *ānanda*.'

After this experience he left the bank of the Ganga and came to Puri. Scriptures enjoin travels after *samādhi*. Returning from there he again used to live on the bank of the Ganga. It was during this time we found him listening attentively to the Puranic recitals describing Divine sports, which continued for eight months without a break.

CHAPTER XVIII

By the end of December, 1897 Lātu Maharaj returned from Jaipur to Baghbazar, Calcutta and stayed at Balarambabu's house. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) asked him to come over to Nilambarbabu's house where the Math was situated, but he did not agree. He said, 'I am comfortably lodged here. Yours is but a small house and so many people are already there'.

We have heard Lātu Maharaj say that when Swamiji returned from the West he was invited by Navagopal Babu to perform the worship of Sri Ramakrishna in connexion with the inauguration ceremony of his newly built house. There, after the *puja*, the Swami composed off-hand a Sanskrit couplet which had since been adopted as Sri Ramakrishna's *praṇāma-mantra*, the *mantra* for prostrating at the Master's holy feet ('*Sthāpakaya*' etc.).

'That year Master's birthday celebration was performed at two places: (*a*) At Dakshineswar, organized by Kishori babu; Haramohan collected money for this; (*b*) at Dans' big courtyard in front of the Rāsa temple of Sri Krishna; it was organized by brother Yogin and old Gopaldā. Yogin worked so hard that after the celebration he fell ill.

'When, I heard Yogin was ill I went to see him. He raised his eyes and told me, "You see, Lātu, this illness will not be cured. But do you know what diet the doctors prescribe? They say, 'You must take pomegranate juice, the fine well-fried portion of *luchi*, soup of *māgur* fish, etc.' Just look at their intelligence and sense of suitability! These are meant for the *bhogis*, men given to sense enjoyment. They have money, they have men to prepare these things. We are *sādhus*, we have none except the Lord. We are to maintain ourselves by begging. Is it becoming of us to take such things? What do you say?"

'To that I said, "Look, how you talk. When one falls sick special diet is necessary. For you, they are diet, not articles of enjoyment. Is it wrong to take diet, as recommended by doctors?"'

Yogin: 'I know all that. But who will supply?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Why do you say so? What are we for? We will do all that for you.'

Yogin: 'It needs no mention. But — I tell you a secret. (Holy) Mother wants that my wife should come and prepare all these for me. What is your opinion regarding this? I am a Sannyasin. Should I take the services of my wife now? I am unable to accept the

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proposal, coming though it is from Holy Mother herself. My mind rebels.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'When Mother herself says this where is the occasion for doubt? You should not entertain it. It would not involve transgression.'

Yogin Maharaj : 'No, no. You have not caught the point. If I agree people will say, "Strange are the ways of the disciples of Ramakrishna. They are *sādhus* and yet take the services of their former wives!" We must not give them occasion to speak like that.'

Lātu Maharaj : '(Excitedly) Throw such stuff to the waste-paper basket. Do they desist from such talks even when our behaviour is correct to minutest things? Throw their words to the winds. If we do not transgress righteousness what do their words matter, their howlings? Who will believe them? You, brother,—I entreat you—obey Mother's orders implicitly.'

'Still Yogin hesitated and said "Whomsoever I ask I get the same reply. Even you did not prove an exception! Nobody places himself in my position and answers it. What more have I to say? I know it definitely, this disease will not be cured, however much people may serve and nurse me. And yet to yield —!"

'I told him, "Don't utter such inauspicious words. Why do you repeat 'It will not get cured'. His will can do everything. If he (Master) wants to take you to him all our efforts will be of no avail; and if he wants you here for his work your will to the contrary will be useless. Why then should you think all that and hesitate to obey Holy Mother?" Do you know what he said in answer to this? "You are right, brother, who am I, a non-entity, to oppose? Let his will be done."

'When Yogin's wife came to serve him I came away from that place. His disease actually went on worsening. Brother Vivekananda returned from the West and made special arrangement for his treatment. But nothing availed. He wanted to take him away from Calcutta for a change. Yogin did not yield. At last it was arranged that morning and evening he would be taken out in a boat on the Ganga. Sometimes I used to accompany him on the boat. Oh, the conversation! One day brother Vivekananda showed him from the boat the Math premises and the building.'

So far as our information goes Lātu Maharaj returned to the Yogadyana at Kankurgachi by the end of October, 1898. One day Swami Vivekananda went to see ailing Ramachandra Datta. The latter then occupied the room on the first floor. Lātu Maharaj said, 'Both talked long over many matters pleasantly. Then Ramababu felt like going out for a couple of minutes. The Swami took Ramababu's slippers up in his hands and placed them near the latter's feet. At that Ramababu cried out, "O Bilé, Bilé, what are you doing, what have you done? You are a Sannyasin. For you to do this!" In reply Swamiji said, "Ramadā, am I not that old Bilé of yours? Have I forgotten what you have done for me (referring obviously to Ramababu's advice to him to meet Sri Ramakrishna if he really wanted to know what religion was)?"

In November, the same year, Lātu Maharaj was seen on the Kali-puja night at the Math at Nilambar Babu's house. That day Holy Mother sanctified the new Math ground with the dust of her feet. Referring to this event, Lātu Maharaj spoke to a devotee, 'That day Mother visited the Math ground and worshipped Master herself. That day they (the apostles) took the dust of her feet individually and collected and kept it in a casket. This is worshipped even to day at the Math (?). Mother, was very pleased with the Math ground. Observing that the pinnacles of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar could be seen from there, she remarked, "How nice! people coming here will see them and will be reminded of (what happened) there".'

(To be continued)

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN REALISATION COMES

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THE question has been asked again and again as to what happens to one who has realized the Truth. It is a very practical question. We have been reading the descriptions, in the *Vivekacūḍamaṇi*, of the state of ecstasy that aspirants realize after the highest experience of the Truth. Of course, it is impossible to give any true description of that state of ecstasy. It can only be expressed vaguely. In attaining something we have long looked forward to attain, we have, more or less, an idea of ecstasy. Perhaps a sudden glimpse of ecstasy overwhelms us. If we can remember the highest form of happiness, or ecstasy, we have ever experienced, and then imagine that it is multiplied a thousand-fold and continued for the longest period conceivable, that will give some idea of the ecstasy of God-realization, or the attainment of Freedom. Jñāna Yoga emphasizes that phase of realization, the attainment of absolute Freedom.

Now, what conception do we usually have regarding ecstasy? How do we analyse it? We think that something has happened which has stirred up some faculties in us so that a glandular change has taken place within us, resulting in our being happy. This is true, and not true. No doubt something has happened which has made us realize a state of ecstasy. As an example, suppose you were told that a very dear friend of yours was dead. After a long time, suddenly he comes and stands in front of you — alive! What is your reaction? You are dumbfounded. You are in a state of extreme happiness, ecstasy, but none of your faculties work; you can express nothing. Then, of course, in a few seconds, the low tide of the ecstasy comes, and you embrace your friend, and talk to him, almost incoherently at first, with tears of joy in your eyes. In the height of ecstasy no communication, no outburst of expression, is possible, because ecstasy is such that it robs you of everything else. It occupies the *whole* of your being.

Now what is ecstasy? Can we analyse it scientifically and psychologically? I might say that it is not only a pleasant happening that can put you into an ecstasy. In fact, pleasure and pain do not exist in the state of ecstasy. It is a state which is neither pleasurable nor painful. It can only be described in terms of negation. No matter what the nature of the stimulus is, whether painful or pleasurable, a state comes when you eliminate all your functions and faculties. Your Self, alone, remains in its own intrinsic, unagitated condition. And that is the state of ecstasy. It is a state when you exist in your primordial, native, natural state of existence, in the absence of all agitating conditions. Bliss, in fact, is the absence of all disturbing conditions. That is your real nature. It is not borrowed, not generated. Stimulus has something to do with it, but it does not produce that state. The point I want to establish is that our real Self is our existence in the state of non-agitation, and it is for that reason that we call it blissful. And you are aware of that condition. It is not a fainting spell, you know! It is a state of existence; it is a state of bliss; it is a state of knowledge; and the realization of this is nothing but the capability of getting into that native state of your Self, at will. That is meditation. That is the state of divine ecstasy.

The student in the *Vivekacūḍamaṇi* (beginning with Sloka No. 480) describes his state of ecstasy. He is describing how he has eliminated this and that. Where is the phenomenal universe? Where has the mind gone? There is one continuous current which flows. As we have studied earlier, when the instruction was given to him the teacher emphasized the need to learn the art of eliminating from the

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Self the gross, external world. If you shut your senses the external world will be partially eliminated. Then it still exists in your memory. By shutting the external 'doors' you have gone in one step. But another wall stands in front of you. It is the wall of thoughts and memories. Your mind then turns over the pages of your picture-album of memories. You have to apply a different technique to eliminate this. After eliminating the other two you find that there is still a wall — the wall of self-consciousness, that 'I am' feeling. Although your self-consciousness has expanded, having been freed from the limiting conditions of the senses and other faculties, yet it does not allow you to get into the state of final ecstasy. The ego-consciousness, the 'I am' consciousness remains. When the self-consciousness is free from the 'I am' feeling, when the 'I' vanishes, you merge into the ocean of Reality, which is bliss. That is ecstasy. You are full of bliss; in knowledge complete, and in existence limitless. For that matter, you are Free.

Now, I would like to point out here the difference between two sorts of statements: Argumentative statements, when you feel that you have to establish the truth of your position by argument and statements made with the force of realization. By making an argumentative statement you stimulate the power of reasoning in your hearers, but by making a statement based on realization you convince the mind of the hearer, without his having to go through reasoning and argument. This brings to my mind a beautiful incident.

You remember that Swami Vivekananda was for some time, as a youth, under the influence of agnosticism. He was born a mystic, but he wanted to verify everything before he would believe it. He even corresponded with a leading agnostic of that day, Herbert Spencer, who appreciated the intelligence of this young man from India. Whenever he had the opportunity of coming in touch with a religious leader, Swami Vivekananda, who was then still in his teens, would make it a point to talk with him. He embarrassed many by his direct question: 'Sir, have you seen God?' You can imagine the nerve it takes to say, 'No,' especially if the man cares for his prestige! Instead of answering directly, most people would begin to reason with him. Swami Vivekananda was sick and tired of having such intellectual 'wrestlings'. When he came to Ramakrishna, he asked the same question, point-blank: 'Sir, have you seen God?' And Ramakrishna replied, unequivocally, 'Yes, my boy.' After that, Swami Vivekananda was non-plussed; it seemed that there was nothing else to be asked. Somehow, Vivekananda stammered, 'How?' And Ramakrishna replied, 'Why, just as I see you and you see me.' 'Is it possible for someone else to see Him?' asked the young Vivekananda. 'Of course it is,' was the answer, 'if I can see Him, you also can.'

In the Sanskrit language there is an expression, 'Siddhānta Vākyaṁ', meaning the successful, the final climax of speech or utterance. A statement which has attained the climax of success. Such a statement can only be made by the power of realization, and it can only come from a living source. If Ramakrishna tells you, you are Brahman, what a tremendous difference it makes than if I say so! His is a 'Siddhānta' expression. Blessed is the man who has the opportunity of contacting, even by reading, Siddhānta expressions that do not raise doubts, but take him into a new region.

Do not think that the 'Siddhānta' expression is something you accept through reverence, awe, or fear. What you accept in that way does not sink very deep within you. You may be overpowered by a great personality, but when you come home you find that the statements he made are fomenting and creating many objections in your mind. Suppose you go to a great scholar and you hear from him a profound statement; you feel sure it must be true. You accept it, but later that statement begins to throw up bubbles of doubt and argument in your mind. Know that that was not a 'Siddhānta' statement. The distinguishing feature, the criterion, of a 'Sid-

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dhānta' statement is that it takes you out of the region of doubt. You might not be able to realize the truth of the statement immediately, but doubt will vanish. It comes that way only from a living source. I can speak of that with emphasis from my own experiences with living sources of power. As we cannot all have these experiences we have to be stimulated by argument and reasoning.

There is a humorous story told about one of the devoted householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, Rama Chandra Dutta. In his enthusiasm, Rama Chandra wrote a book about Ramakrishna's teachings, explaining what he meant by the various things he said. He would ask the newcomers to read his book, so that they would be able to understand what Ramakrishna taught. Swami Vivekananda, who was a cousin of Rama Chandra, used to joke with him, saying, 'If Ramakrishna cannot make himself understood, the chemist will explain him!' (Rama Chandra was a homoeopathic doctor and a chemist). It is like that. A chemist can help another chemist; we can argue and indulge in explanatory talk *ad infinitum* but when we hear a 'Siddhānta Vākya' there is no need for these. All our doubts vanish.

We started with the question: What happens to one who has attained the highest state of realization? In the Upaniṣads there are three conditions, describing that state. First, all the knots of the heart (the inner being) are cut, are severed. Secondly, all doubts are removed, and thirdly, all Karma dies out.

The 'knot' is taking the unreal for the Real. That is the fundamental knot. If you can loosen that one, all other knots will be loosened automatically. In Sanskrit 'Granthi' means knot. 'Chittasya Granthi' means the tie or the knot that fastens the Chit with matter. The thing that ties up Reality and appearance creates confusion. It is difficult to distinguish them. That is the 'knot', and that being removed all other knots, of egoism and selfishness, are removed as a matter of course. Then we have permanent recognition of the Reality, as distinguished from the appearance.

'All doubts are removed.' Doubts appear as the result of not knowing the truth. When you have known the truth there is no doubt. What a state that is, when knowledge flows uninterruptedly! You will find that a good percentage of your problems arise out of doubt. When you read Schopenhauer, and some other Western scholars, you will find that they also speak of recognition of the truth, 'without doubt'. Doubts vanish forever when you hear a real 'Siddhānta' expression. Even when you read such expressions your mind is led away from doubt. Hence, the importance of reading books which quote 'Siddhānta' statements.

'All Karma dies out.' Karma is a technical expression. The dying out of your Karma means that you do not forge any new chains to bind you down. We do things impelled by a cause, according to the law of causation, we all know that. The chain of causation controls a good part of our lives. When you realize the highest truth, that chain is broken, because you no longer act from a sense of ego. Your actions, as a free agent, cannot bind you and create any further Karma.

Now let us read these verses starting with No. 495, to see how they are records of 'Siddhānta Vākyaṁ', or statements made by a man of realization. He has realized his Self as the Self of all. He has complete realization of the essence, Chit, that of which knowledge is composed; that which comprises the subject and the object. He is established in Brahman, which is immovable and actionless, like Mt. Sumeru (reference is to a story from the *Adhyatma Ramayan*?). He knows himself as the 'ocean of Bliss'. His ego-consciousness has vanished. He is full of Bliss. Fullness knows no agitation.

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RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

(Continued from the previous issue)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

Definition of Raja Yoga

Patañjali defines yoga as 'restraining the mind-stuff (*citta*) from taking forms (*vṛttis*)' (sūtra I-2). Complete mastery over the mind and its modifications is the aim of yoga. The author of the *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha* discusses both the negative aspect (*nirodhārtha*) and the implied positive aspect (*saṁyogārtha*) of the above definition. Patañjali (according to whom '*yujir*' is the root of the 'yoga') and Yājñavalkya, (according to whom, yoga is the union of jīvātman and Paramātman) both support the positive aspect (*saṁyogārtha*) of yoga. Vyāsa (the commentator of the Yoga-sūtra) also takes the positive meaning of 'yoga' as *samādhi*, but, Madhvācārya does not accept this meaning on the ground that *samādhi* is only a part of the whole yoga.[14] According to him, Patañjali gives the negative aspect (*nirodhārtha*) of yoga and Bhoja also takes it as the separation between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. Vijñānabhikṣu gives a synthetic meaning of yoga : 'the inhibition of functions of the mind which leads to the absolute abidance of the Spirit (Puruṣa) in his real nature.'[15]

Thus, in Rāja yoga also, the meaning of 'yoga' is *samatvam* (equanimity of mind). The yogic practices will enable a man to arrest the modifications of his mind and thus bring it to equanimity. Such a mind, free from all pains, will lead us to our original blissful nature. This is the ideal to be realized through *samādhi*.

[14] *Sarvadarsanasamgraha* (Khemraj Shrikrishnadas, Bombay), p. 276-77.

[15] *Yogasarasamgraha*, edited by Jha, (T.P.H.). p. 2.

Characteristics of Raja Yoga

1. Rāja Yoga is an applied practical science, of the mind, which undertakes the methods of inhibiting its modifications. It proposes to start from the internal world to study internal nature and through that control the whole—both internal and external worlds.[16] The eight-fold yoga is to be truthfully practised to achieve control over the vagaries of mind. Mind has immense powers and they can be made manifest during the process of inhibition of the modifications of the mind.

2. It is individualistic in its application. The yogic practices cannot be applied by another, they are to be self-applied to check the mental modifications, as the *Gītā* says, a man can lift himself by himself, for the Self alone is the friend of the self (VI-5).

3. It quickens the process of unfoldment of mind. For Śrī Aurobindo it is the shortest way to arrive at the largest development of spiritual power.[17] Patañjali has indicated that for the extremely energetic aspirants success is speedier (I-21). By Rāja Yoga one can achieve control over the mind and attain perfection in one life which millions fail to achieve in myriads of lives. It advocates a firm faith in the personality of man who by strenuous efforts can quicken the speed of evolution towards perfection.

4. Rāja Yoga does not pre-suppose any dogma or religion. It lays down universal and general principles for controlling one's own mind. As it is an experimental science, the truth of its precepts can be realized by any man who experiments with it. As such, the

[16] Vivekananda, Raja Yoga, p. 9.

[17] On Yoga, p. 699.

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question of faith does not arise. Though Patañjali talks of results of misery and action and mentions that success can be achieved by devotion to Him (I-23), yet, he regards Īśvara only as a more elevated *puruṣa* (I-24) as compared to other *puruṣas*.

Patanjali's Definition of 'Yoga' Explained

Patañjali defines 'yoga' as restraining the mind-stuff (*citta*) from taking various forms (*vṛttis*). 'Citta is the stuff of consciousness formed of the three *guṇas, sattva, rajas* and *tamas* with an absolute preponderance of the first'.[18] Vyāsa mentions three tendencies of *citta, viz., prakhyā* (light), *pravṛtti* (motion) and *sthiti* (immobility); and according to him the connection of *citta* with *sattva, rajas* or *tamas* determines the activities of man e.g., *citta* when predominated by *sattva* becomes enlightened (*prakhyārūpa*); when it is associated with *rajas* and *tamas* will have a desire for fame and name.[19] *Citta,* being ever-changing, continually transforms itself into its diverse states. The three *guṇas* are the substratum of *citta,* and as they are plastic and translucent, can reflect the objective world or transform themselves into its exact copies. Dasguptā holds that our whole body is pervaded by consciousness and, therefore, if any part is affected, it will produce some sort of thinking or feeling or activity.[20]

Citta is the *pariṇāma* of *prakṛti* which is due to the predominance of *sattva* over *rajas* and *tamas.* It is the most subtle evolved form of *prakṛti. Citta* with the functions of desire and fancy will be called *manas*; with determination and resolution, *buddhi*; with the ego-idea, *ahaṁkāra* and with only memory and past *saṁskāras* the *citta.* (It is the form of *citta* in the *samprajñāta samādhi*). In Vedānta, *citta, manas, buddhi and ahaṁkāra* together are called *antaḥkaraṇa.* Radhakrishnan takes *citta* in a comprehensive sense to include intellect, self-consciousness and *manas.*[21]

However, to our thinking *manas, buddhi* and *ahaṁkāra* are the functions (*vṛttis*) and not the parts of *citta.* All the three may disappear as they do in *samprajñāta samādhi,* and still *citta* in *vivekakhayāti* may be there. Vacaspatimiśra in his *Tattavavaiśāradī* uses *citta* as a partial expression of the inner organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*), the thinking substance.[22] Vijñānabhikṣu with the help of the Sāṁkhya Sūtra V-107 (*Bhāgaguṇābhyāṁ tattvāntaraṁ vṛttiḥ*) argues that *vṛtti* is different both from being a part and an attribute of *citta. Vṛttis* are like the sparks thrown out by fire (*citta*), but sparks are not a part of that fire; and *vṛttis* cannot be an attribute of *citta,* because action can belong only to a substance and not to an attribute; but *vṛttis* arise in the process of *citta* going out to establish a relation with the object. *Vṛttis* are the functions of *citta* and neither a part nor an attribute of the same. Therefore, *antaḥkaraṇa* can rightly be said to include *citta, manas, buddhi* and *ahaṁkāra.*[23]

Functions of Cittavṛttis

Vṛttis are the modifications of *citta.* They are the various forms taken up by the mind-stuff. *Citta* is characterised by its dynamic nature. It is ever-changing. When it comes in contact with objects, it takes up that form. The various forms of *citta* are the *vṛttis.* Dharmarāja in his Vedānta Paribhāṣā explains *vṛtti* thus:

'Here, just as the water of a tank, going out through a hole and entering fields through channels, comes to have, even like those (fields), a quadrangular or other figure, similarly, the internal organ too which is of the nature of light, going out through the sense of sight etc. and reaching to the locality of contents like pot, is modified in the form of con-

[18] Dasgupta, S. N., *Yoga Philosophy in relation to other systems of Indian Thought,* p. 260.
[19] Vyasabhashya, I-2.
[20] Dasgupta, S. N., *Yoga Philosophy in relation to other systems of Indian Thought,* p. 260.
[21] *Indian Philosophy,* Vol. II, p. 245.
[22] Yogasutra I-2 (*Chitta sabdena antahkaranam buddhi upalaksayati*).
[23] *Yogasarasamgraha,* Jha, (T.P.H.), p. 6.

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tents like pot. This same modification is called a psychosis (*vṛtti*) '.[24]

Thus, *vṛtti* is the consciousness taking different forms (*viṣayacaitanya*). Niśchaldāsa in his *Vṛttiprabhākara* defines it as the effect, of the internal organ and *ajñāna*, which gives the knowledge of the object.[25]

Citta is the reservoir of immense power which may be dissipated in any direction — good or bad — and because of this, one is advised to restrain the *vṛttis*. As we have already said, *citta* has a disposition to vividness (*prakhyā*), to activity (*pravṛtti*), and to inertia (*sthiti*). When the *citta* is commingled with *rajas* and *tamas*, it acquires fondness for supremacy and for objects of the senses; when pervaded with *tamas*, tends towards demerit, non-perception and passion. When *tamas* dwindles away but is faintly pervaded by *rajas*, it tends towards knowledge and passionlessness; and when *rajas* is also removed, it is grounded in itself. At this stage it is the discernment of the difference between the *citta* and the Self.[26]

Thus, *citta* has both the upward and the downward tendencies. The mind which makes a man a noted scoundrel can turn him into a notable saint. The first stage of restraining will be, therefore, not to allow the *citta* to go downward but by practice and renunciation to help it go upward.[27]

(*To be continued*).

[24] Edited by S. S. S. Sastri, p. 13.

[25] p. 1; *Vrtti Ratnavali*, p. 579; *Siddhantabindu*, pp. 96-97.

[26] Woods—*Harvard Oriental Series*, Vol. XVII, p. 8.

[27] Y. S. I-12.

RITUALS

S. S. MURDESHWAR

RITUALS are the physical activities of man directed Godward. They are as old as man. The first man, and he is said to be an African, looked upon the phenomena of nature with the feelings of wonder, terror, mystery, reverence and joy. He instinctively understood that there was a mighty and Supreme Being that must have created this wonderful and awe-inspiring Nature, and if he wanted to be happy, he must propitiate It by offering some prayers for his protection and food etc. This emotional explosion produced some kind of 'noise-with-meaning', perhaps, in imitation of the noises in nature like the roaring of clouds (*da, da, da*) or cries of animals or birds. This 'noise-with-meaning' may be the foundation of the vast and mighty empire of Ritualism. As time rolled on this empire gained in dimensions and a vast literature on rituals sprang up into existence. To regulate, to conduct and to perform these rituals became the function of a separate class of people called the priests who were learned in the art and science of these rituals.

The religious emotion of man needs an outlet to express itself and it is satisfied by the performance of ceremonies, worship etc.

The Vedas fall into two divisions, viz. Karmakānda which deals with rituals and Jñānakānda dealing with spiritual knowledge.

During the Vedic period the number of these priests necessary for a sacrifice became as high as 22 and they opened schools to train pupils in their specialized branches of sacrifices. Worship, sacrifices, *upāsanas*, *dīksha*, *puras-charanas*, *vratas* and other forms of worship became the honoured citizens of the empire of Ritualism.

Religious life starts with rituals and ceremonies which are said to be the 'Kindergarten of Spiritual Life'. Religions without rituals stagnate and decay.

Rituals, mythology and philosophy are the three facets of religion. Rituals if performed,

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under the guidance of trained and *sātvic* priests, with devotion and faith lead to the purification of the mind, so essential for an aspirant. Mythology and lives of great saints serve as spiritual tonics to his spiritual body. Philosophy clothes religion with Divinity and declares the aim of man's life to be Self-realization. No one of these alone can lead an aspirant God-ward. But cumulatively they do. It is like a seed which consists of skin or rind, husk and grain. The seed without anyone of these three cannot sprout. All the three contribute to its growth.

'The institution of sacrifice is very ancient and found favour with both the branches of Asiatic and European Aryans. This was the main ritual of these people. The priests regulated and conducted them. The *Taittiriya Saṁhita* is the oldest and the most authoritative work on the sacrificial ceremonies,' says Bal Gangadhar Tilak in his *Arctic Home of the Vedas*.

Again he observes, 'Atharvan and Angiras must have been the ancient sacrificers of the whole Aryan race and not merely of the Vedic people. Therefore, even though Manu, Atharvan and Angiras be not the names of particular individuals, still there can be little doubt that they represented families of priests who conducted, if not originated, the sacrifices in primeval times.'

The Vedic times witnessed many kinds of sacrifices performed to propitiate the Vedic Gods, like Indra, Varuna, Agni and others. Agni is the most important deity in the Vedas, because he carries the oblations offered to the gods.

During the Vedic times the sacrifices were spread over a week, a fortnight, a month or even a year. There were sacrificial seasons when a chain of sacrifices known as *sattras*, was performed. These *sattras* lasted for ten months. The model annual *sattra* (*Gavamayanam*) consists of 14 sections and lasts for 360 days. 'The Atiratra is an ancient sacrifice performed during the night and for the purpose of helping Indra or the deity that fought with the powers of darkness and that such sacrificial acts as putting on the girdle (Kasti) or squeezing Soma, were performed during this period of darkness (months of darkness at the Arctic region, the home of the Aryans).'[1]

Dr A. C. Bose offers a philosophical explanation to these Vedic sacrifices. 'The Vedic ritual is in keeping with its Advaitic character. Unlike the polytheistic or fetishistic ideal, it is one uniform ceremonial, as a rule, without any special applicability to the deity worshipped. Whatever the deity, the ritual is the same. The same is the oblation or libation offered, though in the accompanying prayer one or many gods may be mentioned.'[2]

The Upaniṣads recommend the performance of sacrifices etc. for the purification of the mind. The *Īśa*, the oldest one, does so but exhorts that they should be performed without any desire for fruit. The *Muṇḍaka* praises rituals but later on condemns them when they are performed with a purpose in mind. In this 'battle of ritualism' the *Bhagavad Gītā* has emerged with brilliant victory because it advocates the performance of rituals without any attachment. The verse 18.5 of the Gita declares emphatically that Yajna, Dāna, and Tapas must be performed in a spirit of surrender to God for the purification of the mind.

The verses 10-15 of the third chapter of the Bhagavad Gita are clearly in defence of rituals. Shridhar Swami generally equates Yajna with sacrificial rites. He observes in his Subodhini that the Lord has set the 'World Cycle' in motion. 'Though the work done with desire is out of place in this context, yet as it is meant to show that in general, work with desire (even) is better than inaction, it is not objectionable.'[3] The great Jñaneshwar says that Seva (Worship) is the thresh-hold (Kuruta) of the temple of knowledge. He further observes that the *nitya* and other

[1] *The Arctic Home of the Vedas*, by Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
[2] *Call of the Vedas*, p. 32.
[3] Tr. by Swami Vireswarananda.

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actions prescribed for the Ashramas should be performed in a spirit of surrender.

The offering of a seat on a pedestal, of water (arghya), of bath in water or panchamrita, of food, of waving of lights, of flowers and of leaves (Patri), of sacred thread, clothes, ornaments and music are the rituals observed for the worship of a Personal God (Iṣṭadevatā) through the image. Manasic Puja is also offered to the Supreme Being by the advanced aspirants in spirituality, instead of Bahya Puja as mentioned above. The most simple puja according to the *Bhagavad Gītā* is to offer Patra (leaf), Pushpa (flower), Phalam (fruit), Toyam (water) to the Supreme Being.

'All the rites and ceremonies have their root in symbolism. They denote the personification of a man's faith in the Supreme Being . . . . They show to the eye what the mind believes.'[4]

Every ritual has an esoteric or mystical meaning. It encourages man to lead a righteous life, desired of a spiritual apprentice. The mystical aspect of rituals is very important. 'The central part of every true religion is a profound mystical experience in which the soul feels the nearness of God. And one of the functions of ritualism is to suggest this experience and create an atmosphere in which the soul is predisposed to it. This is done by means of various ritualistic acts, the symbolism of which we dimly comprehend by means of sacred formulas in an ancient archaic language, the meaning of which we only half perceive, but the utterance of which thrills the heart with a vague suggestion, and by means of consecrated things such as images, rosaries, vessels and lamps which with their thousand associations with the religious mood take away the mind from what is worldly, familiar and vulgar. Here we have the subtlest of the functions of ritualism and the secret of its great influence.'[5]

The Shakta Upaniṣads contain descriptions of Mudras and Chakras which are used in the rituals performed to propitiate Shakti. These rituals are described in great detail in the Tantra literature. The main object of these rituals is to sublimate the lower passions of the aspirant to achieve his spiritual aim.

In their hygienic aspect, the rituals have a great significance. Every devotee, before he begins his religious ceremonial, must take a bath and wear clean clothes. Rules for his food, speech, sleep and association are laid down by the *Dharmashastras* of Āpastamba, Bauddhayana, Gautama and others. Pradakshinas (going round) of the Ashwatha tree or temples, Suryanamaskaras, *asanas, pranayama,* going on foot on a pilgrimage and fasts conduce to keep the body healthy. To neglect the health of the body is a great sin. One Sanskrit saying says that it is through the body that a man can attain liberation. Hence the devotee should keep the body healthy. A great saint says that a spiritual aspirant should possess 'Pashupati balam' (Sātvic strength) and not 'Pashu-balam' (Tāmasic). To maintain this health Yogic exercises are prescribed.

According to the Yoga-sutras of Patanjali (1.30) an aspirant has to face eight enemies viz. disease, laziness etc. Yoga practices help him to overcome them and to attain Jñāna ultimately. (Ibid II.28)

Prayers for health and strength are scattered over the Vedas e.g. Shukla Yajurveda XIX. 9. The *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* emphatically declares that the knowledge of the Self cannot be obtained by the weak.

The philosophical, psychological and hygienic aspects of rituals have been dealt with above. Now their aesthetic aspect will be considered. Temples, Chakras, music, dance and paintings and sculpture are pressed into service for the spiritual awakening of the devotee. Lord Shiva in His Nataraja Avatar is the presiding Deity of fine arts and science. All art and science in India have a sound background of religion. Critics of art like Dr. Coomaraswami, Havell, Ferguson, Smith and others looked upon the art of

[4] Prof. D. S. Sharma.
[5] *What is Hinduism,* by Prof. D. S. Sharma, p. 33.

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ancient India with wonder, awe and reverence. They bowed down in homage to the majestic, beautiful and gorgeous temples, which appealed to the aesthetic sense of a devotee and inspired him in his spiritual pilgrimage. Gandhiji says 'Our temples are not meant for show but for expression of humanity and simplicity which are typical of a devotional mood. We have to approach these temples in a humble and penitent mood. They are so many houses of God.'

Will Durant says, 'The Hindu temples were built to give not merely a form to beauty, but a stimulus to piety and a pedestal to faith'.

Śri Śankaracharya says that after self-realization rituals are not necessary, but the other Ashramites must observe them according to the injunctions of the Shastras.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

THE article 'How to Become Spiritually Awakened' by Srimat Swami Yatiswaranandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission has been adopted from a talk given by him at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Begumpet, Hyderabad on the 13th October, 1963. The talk was tape-recorded by Sri C. S. Subba Rao, M.A., M.Ed., of the Osmania University, now Senior Research Officer under the National Council of Educational Research and Training, Delhi. We are thankful to him also for having recorded and transcribed the talk and thus made it available to us.

Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., is Professor of Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University College, Tirupati.

Mr. Susanta De Alwis, LL.B. (Ceylon), B.Litt. (Oxon), Barrister-at-Law (Gray's Inn), is the Assistant High Commissioner for Ceylon, Madras. His article 'The Life and Teachings of the Buddha' is adopted from a talk given by him on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations on the 22nd May, 1965, at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

The article 'What Happens When Realization Comes' is a class talk by Swami Gnaneswarananda on *Vivekacūḍamani* delivered at the Vedanta Society, Chicago on the 1st October, 1936.

'Raja Yoga — Restated' by Sri Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore, is the second instalment of the series.

Sri S. S. Murdeshwar, B.A.,L.T., is a retired Headmaster of Anjuman Islam High School, Bombay.

A REALISTIC APPROACH

THE delayed rains this year in the West Coast and the catchment area of the Cauvery has been worrying Madras cultivators. The *kuruvai* crop which needed transplantation was without sufficient water. To quote a newspaper report, 'the nurseries are already ageing and cannot wait any longer for transplantation'.* It is heartening to see that the situation was realized and taken immediate notice of by the Government of Madras and that it made a swift move through a special representative to contact the Government of Mysore to help the cultivators to tide over the difficulty.

It is reported that as a result of the talks, the Government of Mysore has agreed to release 5,000 million cubic feet over and above the normal quota of water from the Krishnarajasagar reservoir to Mettur to meet the situation, with immediate effect. It is possible to solve many a problem that India faces

* Report from Thanjavur dated 20th July, 1965 in *The Hindu* dated 21st July, 1965.

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today if a realistic approach like the present one is made and dealt with speedily.

Here, we may note that sometimes the Cauvery waters are let off in large quantities from the Krishnarajasagar when it reaches a certain height and when the inflow is very strong. Most of this water cannot be utilized lower down i.e. at Mettur also and so it flows into the sea without benefiting anyone. By a judicious arrangement, however, if the flow into the Mettur reservoir is enhanced during the lean period i.e. between June and July, we think the possibilities of floods and draughts may be avoided to a considerable extent. We hope experts from both the Governments will think over the matter and make some permanent arrangements.

22-7-1965.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SOUVENIR OF SHRI RAMAKRISHNA MELA—1965: Pub.: Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, 24-Parganas, West Bengal.

This exquisitely produced Souvenir gives an idea, in brief, of the activities of the Centre as also the purpose with which the annual Mela is held.

In this Souvenir there are articles by Eastern and Western scholars about the Ramakrishna Movement, and the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and about religion, science and technology. It contains articles in Bengali and Hindi also. It is profusely illustrated and is printed on good paper.

THOUGHTS OF A SHAKTA: By M. P. Pandit. Pp. 45. Rs. 2.00. Ganesh & Co. Private Ltd., Madras-17.

This is a choice selection from the sayings of a reputed Tantra-Sadhaka on several topics like 'Shakti', 'Jnana', 'Japa', 'Upasana' and 'Chikitsa'. Pithily expressed, each one of them affords food for thought, deliberation and experience.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

THE LONELY PILGRIM: By Manubahen Gandhi. Pp. 273. Price Rs. 3.00. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14.

This book, designed as a day to day record of the Mahatma's perilous journeys in the Noakali region, is yet a most outstanding contribution towards understanding Gandhiji's mission and philosophy, and his ideas and ideals. The author had been his most devoted amanuensis in those difficult and dangerous days, and it was her special good fortune to experience how Gandhiji had acted and reacted to the various problems of life and existence. She rightly feels that it is 'beyond the power of language to give a true picture of the exalted state of his mind, and the wonderful work he was doing', notwithstanding the stupendous difficulties all through. The Gita has been his sustaining force at all times. His own commentary on some of the verses, at page 38 and 163, shows how he had himself practised in his own life the doctrines set out therein. He laid down as pre-requisites for his followers 'truth, purity, total absence of affectation and hypocrisy, action after great deliberation and consultation with the Inner Voice and behaviour, strained through the sieve of discrimination and total indifference as to whether it would please or offend others' (198). His faith in Ramnam was unshakable and he could conceive of no other remedy on earth (158); but he took pains to emphasise that the votary should keep to the laws of morality (158). He was not for blind faith but he pleaded for its saturation 'with knowledge and wisdom' (106). He scouted the idea of self-immolation; his own view was that one's body belongs to God and that it has to be looked after and served faithfully and well. His concept of an ideal marriage is set out at pages 90 and 91. He laid stress not only on ethical ideals, which were for the most part abstract, but took care to stress on the cultivation of good manners (56) and sartorial refinement (46).

The book sets out in detail the privations and pains Mahatmaji had had to undergo in what 'was a glorious march undertaken by one of the greatest men in history' (76).

This is a most welcome addition to Gandhian literature and philosophy.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

HINDI

BHAVANJALI AND DEEPANJALI: By Indira Devi. Publishers: Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona-16. Pp. 204. Price Rs. 4.00.

Indira Devi, we understand, has received more than 800 lilting Bhajans from a supernormal plane of inspiration. They purport to come from Mirabai of the royal house of Mewar who passed into history centuries ago as an unsurpassed devotee of Sri Krishna. All these Bhajans have the same theme though there is variation in the manner and the terminology of the songs. A number of selections have already appeared during the last few years and this one is the latest instalment. The hymns have a striking devotional quality and promise to be popular.

M. P. PANDIT.

SANGITA MALA: Pub.: Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Vaidyanath—Deoghar, Bihar. Pp. 56. Price Re. 1.

This is a collection of songs (Bengali and Hindi) which are usually sung in the centres of

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the Ramakrishna Order. In it are contained songs composed by Swami Vivekananda, Girish Chandra Ghosh, Tulsidas etc. It contains also some songs of Ramaprasad and Kamalakanta which Sri Ramakrishna used to sing.

BOOKS RECEIVED

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM AND OTHER TALKS: By Chitrabhanu. Pub. Jaico Publishing House, 125, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay-1. Pp. 51. Rs. 1.50.

LETTERS THAT BRING MONEY AND EXPAND BUSINESS: By Lillian Eichler Watson. Pub. Jaico Publishing House. Pp. 218. Rs. 2.50.

MADAME AMBASSADOR: By Anne Guthrie. Pub. Jaico Publishing House. Pp. 184. Rs. 3.00.

LAND OF THE FIVE RIVERS: Edited by Khushwant Sing and Jaya Thadani. Pub.: Jaico Publishing House. Pp. 181. Rs. 2.50.

INDIA OUR FIRST LOVE: By Sadhu Ittyavirah, Kadanad P.O., Via Anthinad, Kottayam Dt., Kerala. Pp. 18. Price 25 P.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA BHAGAVATAM: (Malayalam) By Swami Vishadananda. Pub. S. K. Parameswara Pillai, Trivandrum. p. 274. Price Rs. 3.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS MISSOURI, U.S.A.

SHORT REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES

(April, 1964, through March, 1965)

Sunday Services: Swami Satprakashananda, who is in charge of the Vedanta Society, conducted regular services in the Society's chapel on Sunday mornings except during eight weeks of the hot season. He dealt with different religious and philosophical topics. The services were open to the public. Students of comparative religions of different colleges, churches, and synagogues were among the audience.

Meditation and Discourse: Every Tuesday evening the Swami conducted a meditation class and gave a discourse on 'The Bhagavad-Gita'. Students and members of different religious and educational centres also attended the meetings.

Throughout the year the chapel was open for silent meditation on all weekdays from 11 to 12 noon. Every day some devotees came.

During the summer recess, while the regular services were suspended, the Vedanta students met regularly every Sunday morning and Tuesday evening at the usual time for prayer, meditation, and for hearing the Swami's tape-recorded lectures.

Anniversaries: The birthdays of Sri Krishna, The Buddha, Sri Sankaracharya, Sri Ramakrishna, The Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda were observed with devotional worship in the shrine. On the following Sunday a special service was conducted in the chapel to celebrate the occasion. On Sri Ramakrishna's birth anniversary a Hindu dinner was served. On every other occasion the audience partook of light prasad. On Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary documentary sound films on his life and message prepared by the Government of India were also shown. Besides, other festivals such as Good Friday, the worship of the Divine Mother Durga, and Christmas Eve were observed with special service in the chapel.

Other Meetings at the Society: Two additional meetings were held in the Society's chapel: One for the Adult Education Group of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and the other for the High School students belonging to the Richmond Heights Presbyterian Church. On both occasions the Swami answered a number of questions after the talk.

Lecture Engagements: The Swami was invited to speak on Hindu religion and philosophy at different educational and religious institutions in and outside St. Louis., viz., Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota; the Missouri Methodist Church, Columbia, Missouri; Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, and the Temple Shaare Emeth, St. Louis. On every occasion there was a discussion after the talk. The Swami answered questions. At Concordia he spoke a number of times.

Other Activities: The Society's library was well utilized by its members and friends.

About forty guests and visitors from different places came at different times. They usually talked with the Swami and attended the services.

The Swami gave interviews to the seekers of spiritual instruction and to those who came for the solution of their personal problems.

The Founding of the Vedanta Society of Kansas City, Missouri: The Vedanta Society of Kansas City, Missouri, was founded under the auspices of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, to which one of its devoted members, Mrs. Anne W. Fawcett of Kansas City, Missouri, had bequeathed a house for the purpose.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, KANPUR

REPORT FOR 1964-65

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Kanpur fall under three heads: Spiritual and Cultural, Educational, and Medical. Besides regular worship, prayer and meditation, religious classes were held on Sunday evenings in the Mission premises and in the other parts of the city on Sunday mornings.

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Relief: The Ashrama collected and sent Rs. 19,270.33, some dhoties and sarees and other daily necessities of life to the different relief centres started by the Mission for the East Pakistan Migrants Relief during the year.

Educational: Besides an effective scheme of imparting thorough general education within the framework of the prescribed syllabus, the School has been making an earnest endeavour to provide a scope and atmosphere conducive to an integrated growth of the personality of students. Especially moral education reinforced by a close vigilance over students' conduct is a strong point of the institution.

The Higher Secondary School run by the Ashrama had 652 boys on its role during the period. The School library had 5,715 volumes and 5,609 books were issued to the staff and students. This year educational guidance was given to 148 students of class VIII and vocational guidance to 88 students of class X. The School has also provided increased facilities in the teaching of Science.

Medical: The Charitable Hospital run by the Ashrama has five departments: General Diseases, Opthalmology, Pathology, Dentistry and Radiology. The total number of patients treated during the year was 1,90,315. 540 operations were performed and 21,319 injections were given. The Laboratory examined 368 specimens. 288 patients were treated with Electro-Therapy. 269 operations were done in the Opthalmic Department. 177 patients were examined under X-ray.

While expressing their gratefulness to their friends and sympathisers for the help rendered, the management appeals for funds for the completion of a library building, to build a science laboratory for the school and to meet the large deficit of Rs. 11,273.97 (incurred during the year).

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MYSORE-2

SUMMER RETREAT FROM 1-5-'65 TO 17-5-'65

SHORT REPORT

The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore held a Summer Retreat for two weeks for High School and College boys at Sri Ramakrishna Vidyashala, Mysore, in order to give an opportunity for the earnest seekers to come in closer touch with the monks of the Order and getting acquainted with the literature and ideals of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna. The aim of the Retreat was as follows: (1) To make young men study themselves through questioning and reflection and enable them to find their own way of development. (2) To supplement their school and college education by an understanding of the fundamental spiritual principles that have formed the basis of Indian culture. (3) To impart a knowledge of our basic scriptures. (4) To develop among them a respect for all religions. (5) To teach some practical disciplines that may be followed up afterwards as a daily practice.

As many as 175 applications were received from candidates intending to join the retreat but only 62 could be selected. The entire course was free except that a concessional boarding charge of Rs. 50/- and Rs. 25/- was collected from a few well-to-do and middle class candidates. Their number was 16 and 10 respectively. 36 were fully free.

The candidates had a busy routine all the days. Chanting of the Vedas and Gita was taught to the boys. There were congregational prayers morning and evening. Three classes each lasting an hour were held daily by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order on one or the other of the following subjects: the Gita, Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, Teachings of Swami Vivekananda, the Ramayana, Mahabharatha, the Upanishads, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, etc.

Nutritious food was supplied. Outdoor games were compulsory for all. Short excursions were arranged. The candidates were taught to live a life of healthy discipline. The whole course of study was in Kannada as the candidates were all from the Mysore State. The Retreat was a great success inasmuch as the candidates who participated had perceptibly increased their eagerness and respect for the spiritual ideals. Most of the boys have expressed their eagerness for Retreats for longer duration and of greater frequency.

The management acknowledges the donations received from the different individuals and institutions for the expenses of the Retreat and thanks them all.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MANGALORE

REPORT FOR 1964-65

The Ramakrishna Mission, Mangalore maintains a Boys' Home for poor and meritorious students. It also runs a Charitable Dispensary. The number of boarders studying in the different institutions at the end of the year was: Higher Elementary School 12, High School 25, College 4. Of these 34 were free, 2 concession-holders and 5 paying. In the Balakshrama an attempt is made to impart integral education through the inculcation of spiritual values in their widest sense. They participate in the daily routine of the Ashrama such as the morning and evening congregational prayers.

The Charitable Dispensary treated 31,571 patients in 1964-65 of which 6,800 were new cases. The Laboratory examined 636 specimens, 1,445 injections were given, and 42 dental extractions were done.

The management expresses their gratitude to all contributors for their generous help towards the maintenance of the institution, and appeals for funds for the maintenance of poor students, completion of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial, and for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LII SEPTEMBER 1965 No. 5

PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

शक्त्याधिक्ये जीवितं चेद्वर्धते तत्र वृद्धिकृत्। न शक्तिः किंतु तत्कार्यं युद्धकृष्यादिकं तथा ॥५२॥
सर्वथा शक्तिमात्रस्य न पृथग्गणना क्वचित्। शक्तिकार्यं तु नैवास्ति द्वितीयं शक्यते कथम् ॥५३॥

Śaktyādhikyé, when there is an excess of power ; *jīvitaṁ*, the life ; *vardhaté cet*, if increases ; *tatra*, in that instance ; *vṛddhikṛt*, the factor which thus enhances the life ; *śakti*, the power ; *na*, not ; *kintu*, but ; *tat kāryaṁ*, its effects ; *yuddha-kṛsyādikaṁ*, battle, cultivation and the like ; *tathā*, similarly ; *sarvathā*, in whatever way ; *śaktimātrasya*, of the power only ; *kvacit*, anywhere ; *pṛthak*, separately ; *gaṇanā na*, is not considered ; *śakti-kāryaṁ-tu*, as to the effects of the power ; *naivāsti*, do not exist ; *dvitīyaṁ*, a second entity ; *kathaṁ*, how ; *śakyaté*,[1] (is it) possible.

52 & 53. If it is said that when there is an excess of power the life also increases (in prestige and usefulness),[2] to that the reply is that the factor which thus enhances the life is not power but its effects, as in battle (by conquest of the enemy) or in cultivation (by increase in production). Therefore, power alone cannot be, in whatever way, separately taken into consideration. As for the effects of the power, they have no existence at all (in an absolute sense).[3] Hence how can there be a second entity ?

[1] An alternate reading of this word is *śankhyaté* (doubted).

[2] As the life increases in prestige, due to the greatness of power, the questioner doubts whether a separate existence cannot be attributed to power (*śakti*).

[3] It is not possible to say that there is a second entity other than Brahman before creation as there was no existence of the effects of Māyā at that time.

NOTE : The next verse raises the question whether this Māyā is pervading Brahman or resides only in a part of It and answers by an example.

न कृत्स्नब्रह्मवृत्तिः सा शक्तिः किंत्वेकदेशभाक्। घटशक्तिर्यथा भूमौ स्निग्धमृद्येव वर्तते ॥५४॥

Sā, that ; *śakti*, power (Māyā); *kṛtsna-brahma-vṛttiḥ*, pervading Brahman everywhere ; *na*, not ; *kintu*, but ; *ekadeśabhāk*, resides in a part of It ; *bhūmau*, in

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the earth ; *ghaṭaśaktiḥ*, the power to produce a pot ; *snigdha-mṛdi-eva*, in soft clay alone ; *yathā*, in what manner ; *vartaté*, is.

54. Is that power (Māyā) pervading the whole of Brahman ? [1] No, it does not. But it manifests only in some part of it, even like the power to produce a pot is manifest only in the soft clay of the earth.

[1] If it is said that Māyā pervades entire Brahman there will not be any place where Māyā will not have its sway ; so the liberated souls also will be in Māyā which is a position that makes liberation a state not much better than bondage. If on the other hand it is accepted that Māyā resides in some part of Brahman, the statement that Brahman is without parts, without change and the like will be contradicted — that is the doubt of the questioner. The first part of the doubt is answered in the following verses in support of which *śruti* and *smṛti* passages are also quoted.

पादोऽस्य सर्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्ति स्वयंप्रभः। इत्येकदेशवृत्तित्वं मायाया वदति श्रुतिः ॥ ५५ ॥

Sarvā-bhūtāni, all beings ; *asya*, of this (Brahman); *pādaḥ*, a fourth part ; (*asya*, of this Brahman); *svayamprabhaḥ*, the self-effulgent (changeless part); *tripāt*, three fourths ; *asti*, is ; *iti*, this ; *śrutiḥ*, the scriptural passage ; *māyāyāḥ*, Māyā's ; *ekadeśavṛttitvaṁ*, belonging to a part (of Brahman); *vadati*, informs.

55. 'A fourth part of Brahman is all the beings and three fourths of Him is self-effulgent',[1] informs the Śruti, thus clearly assigning to Māyā only a small space in Brahman.[2]

[1] The reference is to the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, 3. 12.

[2] As Māyā occupies, only a little space of Brahman it follows that liberated souls go into that part of Brahman which is unaffected by Māyā, and is beyond the sway of Māyā — that is the meaning.

विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत्। इति कृष्णोऽर्जुनायाह जगतस्त्वेकदेशताम् ॥ ५६ ॥

Ahaṁ, I ; *ekāmśena*, by a small fraction ; *idaṁ*, this ; *kṛtsnaṁ jagat*, entire universe ; *viṣṭabhya*, supporting ; *sthitaḥ*, remain ; *iti*, in this passage ; *jagataḥ*, of the universe ; *ekadeśatāṁ*, limitedness ; *kṛṣṇaḥ*, Sri Krishna ; *arjunāya*, to Arjuna ; *āha*, said.

56. Sri Krishna in telling Arjuna in the Gita, 'I remain supporting this entire universe by a small fraction of Myself,' brings forth the limitedness of the universe, (the effect of Māyā).

स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वाऽत्यतिष्ठद्दशांगुलम्। विकारावर्ति चात्रास्ति श्रुतिसूत्रकृतोर्वचः ॥ ५७ ॥

Atra, in this instance (when Brahman is not in contact with Māyā); *saḥ*, that Brahman ; *bhūmiṁ*, universe ; *viśwataḥ*, in all directions, both inside and out ; *vṛtvā*, pervading ; *daśāṅgulaṁ*, (by) vast measure ; *atyatiṣṭat*, stands transcending ; *vikāra āvarti*, uninvolved in the effects of Māyā ; *ca*, too ; *śruti sūtra kṛto vacaḥ*, Śruti, and Brahma Sutra declaration ; *asti*, is.

57. That Brahman, when not in contact with Māyā, though pervading the Universe, inside and out, stands transcended by a vast measure.[1] This declaration of the Sruti and that of the Brahma Sutra [2] bring out that there is a part of Brahman which is uninvolved in the effects of Māyā.

[1] Rig Veda. (10. 90. 1.) *Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad* 3. 14.

[2] विकारावर्ति च तथाहि स्थितिमाह Br. S. 4. 4. 19.

DOUBT : If it is said that Māyā resides only in a part of Brahman, will not Brahman be accepted as having parts ? And will this not go contrary to the accepted theory of the Advaitin that Brahman is indivisible ? That is being answered in the next sloka.

(*Continued on page 223*)

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THE NEGLECTED PART OF MAN

WHAT is the idea that we have of man? Usually it is that he belongs to a certain race, a particular country, a certain religion, a distinct community and so on. He is also known to be wise or dull, active or lazy, healthy or diseased, young or old, virtuous or wicked, suffering pain or enjoying pleasure and so on. Here the common man's idea about a human being reaches the blind alley, as it were. What is beyond that he either does not strive to know, or is ignorant of it.

Now, let us analyse this view: race, health, disease, youth, old age — all these — what do they represent? What do they indicate? A little thought will show that all these distinctions can be only of the body. Again, the country, indicates the situation of the body, and wealth and property bring to our mind material possessions. So in all these descriptions we think of man as a creature made of sinews, bone, flesh and blood and we add some more earthly goods, when we think of him as possessing wealth.

However, when we think of him as enjoying pleasure or suffering pain, when we impute to him wickedness, dullness or laziness or when we ascribe to him virtue, activity, or wisdom, we, of course, to a certain extent do not think of man as made only of the body. We unconsciously acknowledge something more in him. For instance, when we say that a certain act of a person pains one it is not the physical pain that is meant, but the feelings of the person. We can understand it better if we substitute the word grief or sorrow in place of " pain ". Similarly pleasure is felt only in the mind. It is also a feeling. Likewise the feelings, compassion, hatred and so on, cannot be of the body but of something else; some will say that it is of the heart, whereas others will posit it as of the mind. Then there are the faculties of thinking and willing. Now, wherever these feelings may be located, it is conceded that there is something which is other than the body which resides in it and which does this feeling, thinking and willing. Thus far all agree; though some materialists may still persist that all feelings are also due to the changes in the brain cells. However what puzzles the materialist is that the body, though its brain cells remain intact, fails to respond to the stimulus however strong from outside, when that vital power, life, has left it. On the other hand, this gives the believer the idea that there is something else even beyond the body, the senses and the mind, which dwells in the body, and makes it live and move.

Now, how can a common man know that there is something which is beyond the body and mind? Vedanta gives us the answer. It analyses man's states of consciousness. Mostly man is satisfied with his waking experiences. And most of the intellectuals even do not care to know about the sub-conscious which is active in the dream state and subtly forms man's character in his waking. It is like a store-house. The impressions that are received in the waking by thought, word and deed of a man go to make this store. And whenever occasion arises that particular impression springs forward and presents itself compelling man's attention to itself. And if man succumbs to these impressions repeatedly it forms into a habit and habit becomes nature in no time. So it is necessary that we should know about our own sub-conscious state as well. It is here that we should be careful, for this sub-conscious forms the basis, the foundation, of man's character. Patanjali says that when one's mind is not devoid of waves, modifications, the mind becomes of the nature of the modifications.[1] The importance of the sub-conscious in the formation of character,

[1] वृत्तिसारूप्यमितरत्र I. 4.

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as well as in mental and physical ailments, to a certain extent, has now come to be recognized by the Western psychologists too. But this is sadly neglected by most, even among the intelligentsia.

There is another state says the Upaniṣad, which it calls *suṣupti,* where man does not desire anything, does not dream anything,[2] that is where not only his body, but all the senses along with the mind take rest.[3] This is deep sleep. In this deep sleep man is not conscious of anything but after waking up he becomes aware that he had passed through a state which was 'blissful and where he did not know anything'.[4] Let us probe a little into this experience which is every man's estate. When man says he was 'blissful and did not know anything', two experiences are perceived to go into the formation of that state, one as a corollary of the other. There is bliss and there is ignorance. Ignorance of what? Of the world. People are afraid when it is said that there is ignorance in this state. Even the advanced student of religion finds it hard to acknowledge this. In the Upaniṣads we find students even after living long under a teacher when asked to analyse this state have put forth their genuine doubt as to whether such a state can really be welcome, whether there is anything at all existing in that state. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* for instance, when Indra was taught, 'When a man is asleep, with senses withdrawn and serene and sees no dream — that is the Self,'[5] he was confused. He thought over his experience in that state and came back scared to the teacher and said, 'Venerable Sir, verily, in this state the Self does not know itself as "I am this", nor does it know these creatures. It almost amounts to annihilation. I do not see any good in such a state'.[6] Yet who does not know that a dreamless sleep is the best invigorator for the body and mind, that it is the real restful state! Man also knows that there is bliss in that state. Yet, says the Upaniṣad, that is only the nearest approach to man's real nature that can be made by any living being. The real is far far above that. And that is the Ātman. And that is to be seen.[7] When man knows his real nature, when he realizes who he really is, he forgets all the world. So we see that real bliss is not in accumulating treasures here but in giving them up, in forgetting all about the world and being one with the Self. As in deep sleep, we have not a care, not the slightest worry, not any hankering, so when man realizes his real Nature he becomes perfectly care free, like a child. Now we may ask why is it then that it is equated to *suṣupti*? No, there is no question of bracketing the two. As an experience that is in the easy reach of every man, the state of *suṣupti* is cited as an example where there is no desiring, no dreaming, just as in the true nature of man in order to give an inkling into the nature of the latter. *Suṣupti* is also a state where unalloyed happiness exists — a happiness which is not induced by something from outside of the Self. But there the comparison ends. In *suṣupti* there is ignorance of both the world and of one's own true nature.[8] But in the *turiya*, the fourth state, as the sages call the super-conscious state, there is knowledge and illumination. Ignorance has dropped off and that makes a great difference, as vast as between light and darkness. This fact should not be forgotten. If it is forgotten then we are certain to confuse the issue. The difference between the two, viz. deep sleep and the super-conscious is well brought out by Swami

[2] यत्र सुप्तो न कंचन कामं कामयते न कंचन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम् *Mandukya*, 5.

[3] स्वमपीतो भवति । *Chandogya*, VI. viii. 1.

[4] सुखमहमस्वाप्सम् । न किंचिदवेदिशम् ।

[5] तद्यत्रैतत्सुप्तः समस्तः संप्रसन्नः स्वप्नं न विजानाति एष आत्मा । *Chandogya*, VIII. xi. 1.

[6] एतद्भयं ददर्श नाहं खल्वयमेवं संप्रत्यात्मानं जानात्ययमहमस्मिति नो एवेमानि भूतानि विनाशमेवापीतो भवति नाहमत्र भोग्यं पश्यामिति । *Chandogya*, VIII. xi. 1.

[7] आत्मा वाऽरे द्रष्टव्यः । *Brahadaranyaka*, IV. v. 3.

[8] सुषुप्तिकाले सकले विलीने तमोभिभूतः सुखरूपमेति । *Kaivalyopanishad*, I. 13.

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Vivekananda when he said: 'The superconscious state cannot be described, but we know it by its fruits. An idiot, when he goes to sleep, comes out of sleep an idiot or even worse. But another man goes into the state of meditation, and when he comes out he is a philosopher, a sage, a great man.'

II

Now this part in us, the spiritual element, the soul, the Ātman, is totally neglected by us. We take care of the body, of our health. Even from our childhood that has been done for us by our parents. They might have passed sleepless nights at our bedside on occasions, they have also taken precaution to cultivate our mind. For no parent likes to leave his child to develop into a dunce. No effort, within their means, will they spare to prepare the child to face the world. And when grown up we also try to keep ourselves abreast of the developments that are taking place around us, so that we may not be termed backward. Nevertheless, all this is done to face the world, the outside world alone. The inner man's hunger is not appeased. Rarely do we come across people who think of the welfare of their children from this spiritual point of view. The thought of the life's purpose is not inculcated in children, as it should be, with the result that a great void is left. Further, life in the present times has become mechanical and it swiftly rushes through as if on a supersonic aircraft. Man is aimless today. He has not the courage to face the consequences of failure in the world, nay he trembles at the very thought of it. Poverty even for the sake of religion he dares not accept. And this keeps him clinging to some source of income or other till his end. Naturally in this stormy weather it is impossible that man could devote his time to think of things higher. And to make life more complex, man's necessities go on increasing at a telescopic rate; luxuries become necessities overnight, and therefore to keep up with the tempo of the increasing wants, man's life is spent in ever more servitude till the call of death snatches him away. Where then can he find time to devote to his spiritual exercises?

However, man forgets that nothing real can be achieved without sacrifice. Young men nowadays go on adventurous expeditions. They climb hazardous steeps of the mountains, cross difficult terrain, face worst weather, frost, gale and all. Are not many lives lost in such expeditions? Are not some permanently disabled or disfigured during these adventures? If we look at this phenomenon, we cannot say that the spirit of adventure has been lost, only it has been misapplied, misdirected. They do not pause to think, 'What after all is our gain in these expeditions?' A little fame, a great ovation for once, or at the most a living for life. But then is that all that we came for into this world? Is that the aim of human life? Sri Ramakrishna says it is not. The aim of human life, he says, is God-realization, to know God; to see him; to see him not only in the Image but also in our very being, to be aware of His presence always, first in ourselves and then in everything. 'Only he who sees Me in everything and everything in Me, he does not lose My presence nor do I lose sight of him,'[9] says Sri Krishna. What is the meaning of God losing sight of us? It means that we do not put any barrier between the Lord and ourselves. Though it is not possible that we can hide anything from God yet we can hoodwink ourselves by ignoring His presence. That is what most people do. They ignore that Divine Being who resides in their hearts, and thus lose sight of Him. But when they get the vision of God back, there is no more delusion for them. That is what Sri Krishna means in this verse. The next sloka makes this clear, 'One who worships Me residing in all beings in a spirit of unity lives in Me, whatever be his mode of life.'[10] Such a person is always conscious of

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[9] यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ।
Gita, VI. 30.

[10] सर्वं भूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ।
Ibid., VI. 31.

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his true nature, conscious of God's presence; then he loses his identity in God.

But man is afraid of attaining oneness with God. He is perturbed when he thinks of losing his identity, his separateness. Sri Gauḍapāda, the grand-teacher of Sri Sankara, declares, 'Even advanced souls, yogins, are afraid of this *asparśa* yoga, which is difficult of attainment, for they see fear where there is really fearlessness.'[11] So strong are our inherent tendencies, *samskāras*, that it is very difficult and painful to loosen our ties to this world, this body and the ego. Nevertheless, it is a fact that unless we cultivate a taste for the higher things these tendencies will bind us more and more and make us increasingly miserable. If, therefore, man wants to be rid of miseries he should strive to know his true nature.

How can it be done? The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* gives us the direction: 'Hear about it, cogitate over it, and meditate upon it.'[12] Another Upaniṣad says, 'Many have not the opportunity to hear about this. Many even after hearing do not understand it. Wonderful is the teacher of that *Vidya* (knowledge). And rare indeed is the student who grasps it when taught by a wise person'. That this is actually so we can know from the state of affairs in the world, not only of today but from the history of all ages and of all climes. How this is too true can be known from some incidents which Sri Ramakrishna used to narrate. People used to come to the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar and among them some would go and stay to hear Sri Ramakrishna. But others, who accompanied them, after a time would begin to nudge their companions and ask, 'when will you go?' The devotees who were all attention to the Master would just sign to them to sit quiet. But after some time they would again prod and then would say to them, 'You can come when you like, we shall wait for you in the boat'. Does it not look strange? But that was what actually happened. So deep were the tendencies, that they could not bear even talk about spirituality. And if such *samskāras* are to be uprooted, it should be done when people are still young, when habits have not yet been formed, when resolution and strength can be utilized to curb their taking any ugly form. Then only can one be sure of detaching oneself from one's desire for mundane things and attending to one's Ātman. It is like the bending of a supple bamboo pole, when tender, to the required shape. It can easily be done. But once the pole matures you can do nothing with it except use it as it is. It is hard to master these tendencies, and very difficult it is to know our real nature. Does not Sri Krishna say, 'Among thousands of men one possibly endeavours for perfection, and among those that endeavour (one perchance becomes perfect) and even among the perfect, one possibly knows Me in My true perspective'?[13] Sri Ramakrishna used to sing a song, of a Tantric mystic, Ramaprasad, very expressive of the situation:

'In the world's busy market place, O Shyama, Thou art flying kites;
High up they soar on the wind of hope, held fast by Maya's string.
Their frames are human skeletons, their sails of the three gunas made;
But all their curious workmanship is merely for ornament.
Upon the kite-strings Thou hast rubbed the manja-paste of worldliness.
So as to make each straining strand all the more sharp and strong.
Out of a hundred thousand kites, at best but one or two break free.'[14]

You may be wondering what the neglected part of man has to do with God! It has

[11] अस्पर्शयोगो वै नाम दुर्दर्शः सर्वयोगिभिः ।
योगिनो बिभ्यति ह्यस्मादभये भयदर्शिनः ।
Mandukya Karika, III. 39.

[12] श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।
Br. Up., IV. v. 3.

[13] मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
Gita, VII. 3.

[14] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 64.

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everything to do with Him. If you are a dualist you are His servant and therefore remembering the Lord makes you conscious of your spiritual entity. If you are a qualified monist you are a part of the Lord, remembering the Lord you remember also your real relation to Him. Lastly, if you are a non-dualist you know that Ātman and Brahman are non-different and remembering about Brahman you know about the Ātman.

Therefore, as we tend our bodies, and cultivate our minds, take care of our wealth and do all other things in the world outside, so must we also look after our inner Being. For it is the source of all virtues. Grounded in it the virtues do not fail us. Apart from it, though we may develop some good qualities, when faced with tribulations the seeming virtues will wear off like the coating of a gold-plated ornament. Man today feels forlorn because he has neglected his inner Being. Let him try to remember his Self and work on, he will then find everything falling into its proper place again.

PAÑCADAŚĪ — (*Continued from page* 218)

निरंशेऽप्यंशमारोप्य कृत्स्नेंशे वेति पृच्छतः । तद्भाषयोत्तरं ब्रूते श्रुतिः श्रोतृहितैषिणी ॥ ५८ ॥

Niraṁśe api, even in the indivisible ; *aṁśaṁ*, parts ; *āropya*, superimposing ; *kṛtsne*, in the whole ; *aṁśe vā*, or in a part ; (*vartate*, is ;) *iti pṛcchataḥ*, one who asks thus ; *śrotrahitaiṣiṇī*, well-wisher of its hearers ; *śrutiḥ*, scripture ; *tadbhāṣaya*, in his own language ; *uttaraṁ brūté*, answers.

58. To the one who superimposes parts even on the indivisible and asks (whether Māyā is) in the whole or in a part of Brahman, the Śruti which wishes well to all its followers answers him in his own language.[1]

[1] *Answers in his own language* so that he may easily grasp the meaning. This however does not mean that there is any real division in the Indivisible Brahman.

सत्तत्त्वमाश्रिता शक्तिः कल्पयेत्सति विक्रियाः । वर्णा भित्तिगता भित्तौ चित्रं नानाविधं यथा ॥ ५९ ॥

Yathā, just as ; *bhittigatāḥ varṇāḥ*, the colours painted on a wall ; *bhittau*, on that wall ; *nānāvidhaṁ*, various ; *citraṁ*, pictures ; *kalpayet*, projects ; (*tathā*, likewise); *sat-tattvaṁ*, Brahman ; *āśritā*, dependent ; *śaktiḥ*, power (Māyā); *sati*, in Brahman ; *vikriyāḥ*, changes, effects ; (*kalpayet*, projects).

59. Just as the colours painted on a wall project various pictures on it, likewise Māyā which is dependent on Brahman projects on It its effects.[1]

[1] As the colours without a substratum cannot project any pictures so also Māyā without Brahman cannot produce any effects — that is the meaning.

NOTE : The next verse says about the first effect of Māyā.

आद्यो विकार आकाशः सोऽवकाशस्वरूपवान् । आकाशोऽस्तीति सत्तत्त्वमाकाशेऽप्यनुगच्छति ॥ ६० ॥

Ādyaḥ, the first ; *vikāraḥ*, effect ; *ākāśaḥ*, ether ; *saḥ*, that ; *avakāśsvarūpavān*, is of the nature of space ; *ākāśaḥ* ; *asti*, exists ; *iti*, thus ; *sattattvaṁ*, existence ; *ākāśe api*, even in *ākāśa* ; *anugacchati*, follows.

60. The first effect of Māyā is *ether* (*ākāśa*)[1] and that is of the nature of space. Now, in the statement 'ether exists,' the word exists is used because Existence (Reality) flows into ether as well.[2]

[1] आत्मन आकाशः संभूतः । Taittiriya Upaniṣad 2. 1.
[2] Being the effect of Reality whose nature is existence.

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A QUESTION - ANSWER SESSION AT A FRANCISCAN SEMINARY

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

In the winter of 1964-65 a public lecture series was conducted in Santa Barbara, California, titled 'Ferment in Religious Thought'. It was sponsored by the Adult Education Centre of Santa Barbara City College, in co-operation with the Catholic Human Relations Council. There were four sessions, a week apart, each session lasting about two hours. There was a lecture by some authority in the field, followed by a panel discussion and a question period. The co-ordinator of the series was an Instructor in Philosophy at Santa Barbara City College, Dr. Timothy Fetler.

The first session concerned itself with the topic of 'Ferment in Modern Catholicism'. On this occasion the many questions having to do with Roman Catholic doctrine being considered in the two recent ecumenical councils were discussed. The second session dealt with 'Ferment in Modern Protestantism'. The fourth meeting was concerned with the controversy raging at the moment in America over prayer and the teaching of religion in public schools, as well as the complex problem of maintaining separation of church and state in the United States.

At the third session, on February 4, Swami Prabhavananda was the main speaker. He spoke on 'Ferment in Religions of the World'. The lecture was later printed in *Vedanta and the West*, Number 173.

The Swami's lecture was received attentively by an audience of record size. Among those most intently interested was a group of fathers from the Franciscan Seminary situated in Santa Barbara. After the lecture the seminarians held the Swami for some time, asking many questions. When it was realized that Swami Prabhavananda was the translator of some of the very books they were using in their course in oriental religions, and that the Swami spent part of every month in Santa Barbara where the Vedanta Society of Southern California maintains a convent and church, the young fathers were delighted. An invitation to visit the Seminary was extended, and Swami Prabhavananda accepted. The Swami went to the Seminary on the afternoon of March 13, 1965. The very cordial session consisted mostly of a question and answer period, the major portions of which are reproduced below, from a transcription.

Q: *Swami, do you feel, in general, that the moral beliefs and practices, the world principles and the needs, of the average Western man — one who is born and grows up in Western society and has no acquaintance with Eastern religions — are similar to those of the Eastern man, say a Hindu?*

A: First, I must point out to you that this distinction between 'eastern' and 'western' religion is a wrong distinction. After all Christ, in whose name you are devoting your life, was an Easterner. He was born and lived in the East.

And in relation to moral life, or ethical life, or spiritual life, I think that all believe in the same general principles. For instance, you have devoted yourselves to the religious life, and have taken vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. In our religion, also, we take such vows; only our terminology is different. We say that we have to give up cravings for progeny, cravings for wealth, cravings for name and fame — you see, it amounts to the same thing. We are taught to be truthful; not to hurt any being in thought, word, or deed; not to express greed for another's property; and to overcome lust.

We point out that this whole world really is bound by lust and greed, and that worldliness and God do not go together. Therefore, in order that we can devote ourselves to God and realize God in this life — that's what we

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emphasize — in order that we can acquire the saintliness which comes when life and character have been transformed by the vision of God — these are the necessary precepts to follow: truthfulness, not hurting any creature, chastity, overcoming greed.

As for obedience; what is meant by obedience after all? To renounce the ego, the little self — 'I' as distinct from everybody else. This is the cause of all bondage. We point out that the first-begotten son of ignorance is ego. And from that comes attachment, aversion, and clinging to the surface life. Jesus pointed out: 'He who loves this life shall lose it.' Clinging to life is something instinctive, through ignorance. But it has to be overcome. How? There is only one way: to devote ourselves to God, to follow the first commandment: 'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, with all thy strength.' This commandment is universal, the same in the east or west, north or south.

We all worship one God. In Vedic times, long before any history was recorded, it was stated: 'Truth is one; sages call it by various names.' And so it is — one God. You call Him Christ, I call Him Krishna. One man says 'Allah,' while another says 'Brahman.' What difference does it make?

This reminds me of a story. Four men were travelling in the desert. One of them said, 'Oh, I wish I had a drink of water.'

Another said, 'I wish I had a drink of *pani*.'

A third said, 'I wish I had a drink of *jal*.'

The fourth, 'Oh for a drink of *aqua*.'

But the first one said, 'What are you three talking about? *Pani* and *jal* and *aqua* cannot satisfy your thirst; only water can!'

Just then somebody came with some water, and all four pointed to it and proclaimed: 'That's it! That's it!' And they all took some and drank it.

Q: *Could you elaborate a little bit on your understanding of God?*

A: Is it possible to have any understanding of God? That's where we get into difficulty! You define God in this way and I define God in that way, and we quarrel. You say, 'My God is the only God,' and I say, 'No, my God is the only God.' But what is the truth? I'll tell you what our Master, Sri Ramakrishna, said about God. He said the bee, before it sits on the flower and begins to suck the honey, makes a big noise. Then, as it sits on the flower and drinks the honey, it becomes silent. Then again, having drunk the honey and become intoxicated, the bee makes a sweet humming noise. Similarly, those who have no vision of God, who have not gone to the neighbourhood of God even, who only have book-knowledge — they make a big noise about God: 'God can only be defined this way, can only be defined that way.' But as one begins to drink that honey, that sweetness which is in God, one becomes silent; and then again, becoming God-intoxicated, one begins to talk about God.

Some say God is personal, some say He is impersonal; some say He is with form, some say He is without form. Some say God is with attributes; some say He is without attributes. Yet they have drunk of the same ocean of nectar. According to their temperaments, they introduce different ideas when they come to define God. But the truth is, His name is Silence.

I'll tell you a story from our scriptures. A father sent his son away, saying, 'Go and study religion'. The young boy studied for twelve years, and then came back. His father asked him, 'Tell me what you understand of God'. The young man gave a wonderful sermon, quoting the scriptures. But the father said, 'My boy, go back. You have not yet learnt what is to be learned. Go back. Study some more'. So the son studied for another twelve years. Then he came home again. And again his father asked, 'Now tell me what you have learnt of God'. But the son kept silent. So the father said, 'Why, my son, your face shines like a knower of Brahman. You have known Him. His name is Silence.'

Q: *We feel, though, that God can only be defined as silence in the sense that we*

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cannot completely put down what He is — He is way beyond us.

A: The moment you say, 'He is this and that,' you are limiting the unlimited, the infinite.

Q: *Then how do you explain Christ? In him we see the love, the justice, the mercy — all these aspects.*

A: Wonderful! That's right! Christ is like a door through which you gaze into the Infinite, the Absolute.

Q: *From this point of view, how do you speak of God as silence?*

A: When you *see* Christ, and through that door you reach That (the Absolute), then you become silent. Until you have seen Christ you talk about him, and you say he is this and that. We say Krishna also is this and that. If you were to take Christ and Krishna and Buddha and Ramakrishna and shut them all in one room, they would embrace each other. But if you shut a Buddhist, a Catholic, and a Hindu together they'll fight one another. Why? Because none of them has known anything about Christ or Buddha or Krishna or Ramakrishna. When you know, it is different. A dog has the canine instinct for recognizing his master no matter what clothes he is wearing, but we human beings have not even that canine instinct — to recognize that Christ can came in other dress also. It is the same God. (I hope I have not disturbed any of you!)

Q: *Swami, one comment — almost accusation — made against Eastern religions is that these religions de-emphasize the individual so much that they want to annihilate him, to dissolve him so he cannot be himself anymore. In other words, I cannot be 'me' anymore, in a sense.*

A: What is your 'me'? Explain it, define it. Is it your body? Your mind? Your senses? Your character? Would you like to be what you are now forever? Aren't you changing? Aren't you losing your 'me' all the time? So your real 'me' is in the infinite — in God. Find yourself in Him; then you have truly found yourself. This idea about individuality — where is it? Define that which is you. Sages and saints — Christians and Hindus and Buddhists — have dedicated years of their lives to finding out, 'What am I?' Ultimately they lose themselves in God. Shall I quote to you Meister Eckhart, one of the great Christian mystics? This is what he says: 'Most people are so simple that they consider we are here and God is out there. But it is not so. God and I are one.' Is that blasphemous? Find that out for yourselves. We are not the 'I' or 'me' that we think ourselves to be.

Q: *Well, how can you speak of transforming yourself then?*

A: Transforming yourself? You cannot transform yourself; but by devoting yourself to God, by loving God, you can *be* transformed by Him.

Q: *Then who is it that seeks the real identity?*

A: We have an ego. God has given us an ego, He has given us the little self, in order that we can love Him, and in order that ultimately the love, lover, and the beloved can become one.

Q: *I'm still confused. You say we are to seek our true identity in God, and yet I am confused by who this is then that is doing the seeking.*

A: For this you have to go to Upanishadic thought. Atman, which we call the true Self, the real Self, the real I, is Brahman: 'I and my Father are one.' And that Atman is the unchangeable reality within each one of us. But through ignorance from a beginningless time the Atman identifies itself with the sheaths covering it. For instance, the body is a sheath, the mind is a sheath, the life principle is a sheath, and we are identified with them; therefore, the sense of ego. When you analyze what the ego is, you find it has no existence, no reality at all. And yet, such is our ignorance, that we settle our whole world

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upon the false ego. All the Western mystics point out to you (and they are all at one with Eastern thought) that if you can empty yourself of your 'self', there will come the greater unfoldment of God. So this ego that we are holding on to, the individuality that you speak of, is just a shadow.

Here is a parable that we find in our scriptures. Two birds of beautiful golden plumage are sitting on the selfsame tree. The bird on the upper branch is calm and is in its own glory. The lower bird, hopping from one branch to another, tasting the sweet and bitter fruits, forgetful of the upper bird, continues to enjoy and suffer. When it has eaten a very bitter fruit it looks at the upper bird, and sees how calm and majestic, how glorious that bird is; but again it forgets, and goes on eating sweet and bitter fruits, until it has become completely frustrated. Then it gazes at the upper bird, moves nearer and nearer to it, and is gone. All the time the upper bird's shadow was playing; there was all the time just one bird, calm, majestic, in its own glory.

Q: *What is it that caused the bird to look up?*

A: His true nature. Man's true nature is infinite and divine, and no matter how he may go down and down, ultimately that divinity in him unfolds itself and lifts him up. Therefore, none will be lost. As Christ said, we have to be born in spirit, but we have to bring about the death of the ego. Buddha showed the difference between ignorance and spiritual knowledge. He said we are asleep, and we become awakened. Buddha was asked, 'What are you? Are you a god?' He answered, 'No.' 'Are you a man?' 'No.' 'Then what are you?' He said, 'I am *Buddha*, the awakened one.' And he said that everyone will be awakened.

Q: *This unity that we strive for, the unity with God, is accomplished through love. But love demands a separation, and once we arrive at that identity, there's no more love. Right?*

A: No! Love wants to become completely absorbed in the Beloved.

Q: *But as soon as it is absorbed, it is no longer love.*

A: We have a saying in India: 'I want to *taste* sugar and not *be* sugar.' That is your viewpoint. But learn to taste sugar and then see what happens. This is not human love, but in human love also there is what you can call a fruition, a complete absorption. The Sufi mystics describe it this way. There is a knock at the door. From inside comes the question, 'Who is that?' Answer: 'I.' The door does not open. Again a knock. 'Who is that?' 'I.' No response. For a third time comes the knock. 'Who is that?' 'Thou.' The door opens. Love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength, and then see what happens. I don't have to prove anything to you. You will prove it to yourself.

Q: *Is union with God the same in all the Eastern religions?*

A: 'Union with God' is not exactly correct. The language does not express it. The Vedantic (Hindu) idea is this: you are God, and that God becomes unfolded. There are no two to have union. There is just one. I believe Meister Eckhart, among the Christians, had that kind of experience.

Q: *Many of us are not familiar with the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, or the Vedas. Could you just explain to us what these scriptures are—the general content?*

A: Well, I don't know. Suppose I were to say to you, will you explain to me what is in the Bible? That's a very hard task? I'd have to give a series of lectures on the Gita, a series of lectures on the Upanishads. But, generally, these scriptures give the methods and means by which one can realize God.

Let us look briefly at one, the Bhagavad Gita. According to the Gita there are four ways, called yogas, by which one can attain God. One is the path of discrimination. That is, through a process of analysis we try to find out what is Real. Now of course in your discrimination you must define the Real as that which is abiding and eternal. Unreal is that

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which today is tomorrow is not. And so when you learn to discriminate this way you find that God alone is the Reality. Everything else is unreal. He is the one treasure. You devote yourself to Him. This is the path of knowledge, discrimination.

Then there is the path of love or devotion. It is the same as your idea to love God.

Then there is the path of action — work as worship — where every act becomes an act of worship.

Last, there is the path of meditation — psychic control.

All these paths are brought out in the teachings of the Gita. The teacher, Sri Krishna, says that a harmonious combination of all these yogas is best. You see, we have certain natures: emotional, intellectual, active, meditative. So we are told, "Be emotional. Love God. But be discriminative. Also be active. At the same time be contemplative. Combine these yogas." That is what we emphasize—not to be one-sided.

Of course this summary does not do justice to the Gita!

Q: *Swami, could you explain to us a little of the doctrine of rebirth or reincarnation?*

A: The idea is this. If you consider God as the creator of this universe, you cannot admit the beginning of a creation. To admit the beginning of creation is to admit the beginning of a creator. So this creation is from a beginningless time. Now, for instance, if this is our first birth, and the only chance we have, what a calamity! You may say God has given us freedom, freedom of will to devote ourselves to whichever we choose.

But why did He not give us the will to devote ourselves to God? Why did He create some morally blind? Why did He create so many differences amongst individuals? That God must be a cruel, unjust God. And then if this is the only chance we have, and some go to heaven and the rest go somewhere else — well, God is responsible for that; and who would like to love such a God? Love Him through fear? No, we cannot love God that way. In order that we can believe in a just God, we have to believe that He will give us every opportunity, many opportunities, through rebirth or reincarnation, until we wake up. Then all will come to Him. So that in short, is the theory of reincarnation. It is the giving of many chances.

But, you know, Sri Ramakrishna one time was asked, 'What do you think about reincarnation?' And he answered, 'Yes, they say there is reincarnation. But learn to find God, here and now.' That is the practical teaching.

Q: *One of the greatest puzzles for us is why the Hindus and the Hindu religion insist so much on respect for cows. Is not the economic system a bit difficult because the cows are respected thoroughly and are not eaten?*

A: We don't have any such thing as holy cows. It is your missionaries that go and talk about holy cows! Yes, we see God in everything. In the cows and in the dogs, in the birds and the beasts — everywhere we see the presence of God. But we don't believe in 'kneel down and worship mother cow!' I began to hear of that after I came to this country. Some people in India are fanatics, but this is true of any country.

Q: *But they don't eat the cow, and therefore they start to —*

A: They don't eat the cow. Is that anything so bad? Do we have to eat cows to be spiritual, or civilized?

Q: *No, but the economical —*

A: Economical! After all, they talk about poverty in India. Yes, there are poor people, true, and you go there and shed tears for the poor people of India. Yes, they are poor, but what has that to do with spiritual life? Do wealth and spiritual life go together? 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.' Did not your Master teach that? Don't you take a vow of poverty willingly? So what is wrong with poverty? Of course, I don't want India to be poor. But we were slaves for so many years,

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centuries, that it is truly a wonderful thing that we have kept up our culture, our spiritual culture, in spite of poverty and slavery. That is something to admire. And what caused England, what caused Portugal, what caused France to go and conquer India? Her poverty, or her wealth? They drained the wealth of our country. So you talk of economy. Yes, we also want to be rich, we want to feed our people; but we are helpless. Do you think if we just kill those cows the people will be satisfied? That is not the way of a sound economy.

Q: *Swami, one thing that confronts our missionaries when they go to a country is that the people are really so poor; their only concern is where they can get the next meal, and their spiritual concerns are neglected because of that. Have you seen this a problem in India?*

A: No, I would not say so. In spite of her poverty, in spite of her slavery for so many centuries, India has kept her spirituality intact. There is still a living religion of India. I have seen the masses of this country, and I have seen the masses of India — the poor of India. What great depth of devotion they have for God in India! But that does not mean I want them to remain poor.

Q: *Swami, in the Christian religion we make the distinction of natural and supernatural. I was wondering, for example, how would you look upon a couple who loved each other, but let us say they weren't familiar at all with any religion; however, there was love, a true love between this man and woman. Would you call that love exclusively human, or does it in some way participate in divine love? Is there a distinction?*

A: All love is divine. But when one loves a man or a woman and does not know that one is loving God in that person — if one is loving the flesh, or the character, or the mind — it is misguided love, no matter how true that love may be, no matter how faithful it may be. That would not lead you to God. But if you can love somebody, with the idea that there is God dwelling in him, and you love God — that would lead you to the highest.

Your distinction between natural and supernatural is true. This is what we call 'relative' and 'beyond the relative'. In the relative there are three states of consciousness: waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep. We live within these three states, but in them we cannot find God. Yet it is within the waking state that we struggle to find God. Then we are lifted above the relative plane to the plane of — I cannot describe it, it is something *beyond*, that's all I can say. Here we live in the relative plane, and it is by transcending this plane that we have the vision of God, or an experience of God. None can see God with the physical eyes, but he who has eyes to see, sees Him; he who has ears to hear, hears Him — in another plane of consciousness.

Q: *Swami, what was your impression when Pope Paul visited India? What did the people feel about his visit?*

A: People in India don't care to what faith you belong. They would accept and love and respect anyone who represents spirituality. The people in India saw in Pope Paul not a Christian, or a Hindu, but a holy man. We embrace all religions; we accept them all as true. This is the example that we give. There is a certain centre; the centre is God. There are so many radii. As you go along one of these radii you reach the centre, and you see that all radii meet there. That is our belief; that is how we are trained from our childhood. This is the prayer that the Hindu learns as a little boy, or a little girl: 'As there are different streams coming out from different sources, all mingling in one ocean; similarly, the many religions of the world, coming from different sources, all mingle in that one great ocean of love.'

Q: *Is there any distinction between persons and classes in India?*

A: Of course! Just as you have different classes and persons and castes in America, in Europe, everywhere, so we have different classes and castes in India. We know that in

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God, in spirit, we are all one ; but manifestations differ. There's good, bad ; saint, sinner ; all kinds of people : ignorant, wise ; learned, illiterate. In spirit there is oneness, but in expression there is difference, of course !

Q : *Is there any effort to make India classless ?*

A : If you made America classless, there would be no America. Distinction, difference, variety — that is what makes life interesting ; that is what makes the world function. If we all behaved alike, and if our tendencies were all the same — how awful ! Why don't you want differences ? Variety is the law of nature. But at the same time, recognize the underlying unity.

Q : *I think what Father was talking about was difference of opportunity. We talk about a classless society in the sense of equal opportunity.*

A : Oh, yes, in America I know even a pauper is dreaming to be a millionaire, and perhaps he can be a millionaire. So it is in India, everywhere.

Q : *But can a lower-class person become a Brahmin in that sense ?*

A : Not a Brahmin. He can go beyond Brahminhood. I, for instance, was not a Brahmin to begin with, yet now Brahmins come and bow down to me. So what do you say to that ? Right here, an example !

Q : *Can you point to any experience in India, Swami, where you feel that the Christian faith has made a creative contact with the Hindu faith ?*

A : Frankly speaking, as long as I lived in India, I never came in contact with Christians at all. I've seen them, lecturing in the corner of a park. But we never went there, because they would be denouncing the Hindus. That is their way of preaching. You see, such preachers were untouchables to us. I'm sorry to say that, but it is true.

Q : *Swami, I'm very impressed with how very close you seem to be to nature, and I just wondered if you could amplify on your outlook toward the world, and just how nature itself fits into your theology, or approach to God.*

A : In order to approach God there are two things we must practise. One is to close our eyes, forget the world — just God and me. But that is not enough. Then we open our eyes and see God dwells in everything.

Q : *Well, how about utilizing a response to nature ? Say the birds, or the trees, or a beautiful place ?*

A : Wonderful ! I'll give you an illustration of that. I was once on a pilgrimage ; I was about twenty years old at the time. There were about a hundred of us, men, women, old and young, travelling in the Himalayas. As we were walking, we saw the sunrise over snow-capped mountains. It was an exquisitely beautiful sight. All these hundred people sighed. 'Ah !' Then they sat down and closed their eyes. Can you imagine it ? You know what they felt ? If this is so beautiful, how much more beautiful would be the source of all that beauty ! And where is that source ? The Lord within. And so they closed their eyes and tried to commune with God. Yes, nature is beautiful and we love it, but it should remind us only of God.

Q : *I thought you said that God is not really the source of all creation.*

A : Who else ?

Q : *Well, you said He could not be a creator.*

A : I said if God is regarded as the creator, and if the creation had a beginning, then God had a beginning. And we say God is beginningless, creation is beginningless.

Q : *We would say that matter could not be eternal, because then it would be like God.*

A : Nature is not eternal, in the sense that nature is always changing. We do not say it is eternal in that way.

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Q: *Swami, is Hinduism polytheistic?*

A: Neither 'polytheistic', nor 'monotheistic', nor any other of your English words can apply. Forget what you have learned about Hinduism before, please. There is one God. He has many aspects.

Q: *How does Hinduism regard good and evil?*

A: In creation there is good and evil both. Either you have to take this as a relative creation, or nothing at all. But what is good and what is evil? Can we define it? What is good to you today becomes evil tomorrow. There is no such thing in this relative world as absolute good and absolute evil.

Q: *Would a Hindu consider the principle of good and the principle of evil as unequal elements?*

A: They are both here in this universe; otherwise, if there were no evil, you would not recognize good.

Q: *Will evil be defeated?*

A: No, there cannot be a millennium in this world. *You* can defeat evil by rising above good and evil, to God. Goodness is the path to the absolute. But you have to rise above both good and evil. You have to rise above both pleasure and pain, through Christ, to God, the Absolute.

Q: *What would you say is the basis of Hindu ethics?*

A: The basis of Hindu ethics has this one ideal in view: without purity of heart there is no possibility of realizing God. That which would lead you to God is good; that which would take you away from God is evil. For instance, why should I not hurt anybody? Because when I hurt another I hurt myself. I hurt God, for God is within.

Q: *But on an abstract level, you might say God is not 'hurtable'.*

A: Yes, that's true. But because I recognize God in you, I would not hurt you.

Q: *I'd like to know what you think about the relationship of poetry and religious language.*

A: You know, I'm not a poet. But it's wonderful to express God's truth in poetry and poems. In fact, God is said to be a great poet. *Kavi* in Sanskrit means 'poet', and God is considered a great poet.

Q: *Do you have any comment on the Christian belief that this world comes to an end? Do you believe that?*

A: No, I believe it is beginningless and endless. But for you and me — we get out of this mess!

Q: *But we come back?*

A: Oh, no! If we are devoted to God, and find God, then we do not come back. We have to come back *until* we find Him. This creation is infinite and is going on infinitely. That is His play.

Q: *What would you say about Christ's statement interpreted as saying the world will end?*

A: Did Christ say that?

Q: *According to his followers, he did.*

A: I'd like to see that — what Christ said. You know, at one time I was in an apartment in Portland, Oregon. And two young ladies knocked at the door. I opened the door and said, 'What is it?'

They said, 'We are preachers.'

I said, 'Just a moment. I'm going to hold a class; you come along with me.'

So I went and held a class and they followed me and attended the class. After the class, when I asked for questions, they said, 'Do you believe in the Bible?'

I said, 'Yes, I do.'

They asked, 'Every word of it?'

I replied, 'Do you believe every word of it?'

'Yes, we do.'

I asked then, 'Have you read it?'

And they answered, 'No.'

I said, 'That's why you believe in it!'

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

BRAHMACHARI HARI PARVAT records : 'I saw Lātu Maharaj a few days here (at Nilambur Babu's or Belur Math ?). Sarat Maharaj by then, had returned from the West and was staying at the Math. He looked smart and kept everything tip top and in its proper place. Lātu Maharaj used to enter his room often and leave everything pell-mell — taking a book from the table he would leave it on the bed, or the inkpot from the centre of the table to a corner hidden in papers. It became a regular routine, so to say, with him. Sarat Maharaj's bed sheet was milk white. Lātu Maharaj would deliberately drag his feet laden with dust on it and would roll on it and laugh. At this Sarat Maharaj would ask him quite understandingly, 'What are you doing, brother Lātu ?' Lātu Maharaj would laugh and say, 'Nothing, only testing if you remember those days and ways.' 'What ways ?' Sarat Maharaj would ask. Lātu Maharaj : 'You have forgotten them so quickly !' Sarat Maharaj would press him to speak out, and Lātu Maharaj would simply say, 'I am testing how much Westernized you have become.' At this Sarat Maharaj would also laugh.

'I distinctly remember an incident of another day. They were invited to go somewhere from the Math by boat. All were in it except Swamiji and Sarat Maharaj. Swamiji was seen coming down from his room on the first floor and Sarat Maharaj was not to be seen. So Nityananda Maharaj cried out from the boat, "The Bada Sahib is seen up there but the Chota Sahib is not to be seen yet. We are waiting for his august appearance". Lātu Maharaj passed a cute remark which was heard by Swamiji, who sent a rejoinder from the bank "What are you talking, you rogues ? Bada or Chota Sahib — whatever we might appear to be, know it for certain we have not forgotten that our proper place is under the shade of a jungle tree." The rejoinder made Lātu Maharaj look small.'

Lātu Maharaj was at Belur Math on the day of its consecration. Much later he said to a devotee, 'You know, one who is to be an *ācharya*, a (spiritual) teacher, must have the power to recognize the peculiar traits of people's character. No Ashrama can move smoothly if the head fails to get things done by proper persons. Brother Vivekananda had this power in good measure. Just see he called away brother Hariprasanna from Allahabad to the Math and entrusted him with the construction work. In eight months on the low ground which used to be under water during the high tide, new structures reared their heads up. On the consecration day we were all present. Brother Vivekananda carried the casket containing Master's relics on his own shoulders to the Math shrine. He sat down to do the puja. When the puja was over he addressed a few words to all assembled there, "Today the Master is installed here. Brothers, please look to this that you may be guided by him. Make yourselves fit for this, place yourselves absolutely, unreservedly, under his guidance. He wants only three things from us — purity, sincerity, broadmindedness. Please keep on, as long as you live, paying highest regard to these. Here all faiths, all sects must be respected, harmonized. No one should be subordinated to another."' Words put by the Swami's biographers into his mouth seem to differ but the underlying idea is the same. We have faithfully recorded above what came out of the lips of Lātu Maharaj.

About the middle of December, 1898 Lātu Maharaj was staying at Ramababu's house. This news was learnt from the second daughter

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of Ramababu. She gave us the following additional information also. 'Elder brother Lātu, how devotedly did he serve father for the last twenty-four days — 17 days at our house and seven days at Yogodyana! Father had no sleep at nights and his illness would aggravate ten times then. Mother could not bear to see it. So brother Lātu would not allow mother to serve father at night. Sometimes he would even scold mother and force her to go to some other rooms. And he would serve father the whole night, almost alone. Father required fanning for twenty-four hours of the day, all those days. A minute's discontinuance would make him restless. So days and nights some one or other had to fan him. At nights brother Lātu, with a fan in hand used to sit up all the time; rarely did he hand over the fan to Swami Yogavinode (brother Kali). The day father decided to move to Yogodyan brother Lātu remonstrated with him for a long time; but father would hear none. Mother started crying. And brother Lātu consoled her in various ways. Father moved to Yogodyana on the 28th Paus and he passed away on the 4th Magha (19 January, 1899). The day previous to his passing away Rākhal Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) came to see father. Many days after Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) also come to our house. Brother Lātu continued staying at our Madhu Rao Lane house in Simla for some days after the passing away of father. On the 5th Phalgun there was father's *bhandara* (feeding of people in memory of the dead) at Yogodyan; that day brother Lātu was present there and worked very hard. The same day he left us and the Yogodyan and was not heard of for about four months.'

Lātu Maharaj told us that brother Yogin shuffled off his mortal coil within two months of Ramababu's passing away (28 March, 1899). He said, 'During his last days brother Yogin wanted *nirvāṇa*, complete liberation. When Girish Babu was apprised of this he came to Yogin and said, "Look here, Yoga; don't ask for such things of the Master. Give up all those ideas and you will find all your physical troubles will come to an end." Yoginbhai had great regard for Girish Babu. So he said, "Very well, G. C. but tell me what shall I ask of him." Mark what G. C. said in reply, "Brother, you are all his children. He will never give you *nirvāṇa*. He simply cannot. If he gives *nirvāṇa* to all of you how will his *lila*, sport, continue? As many times he will come so many times you too will have to come. Are you not one of his inner-circle-people? Therefore I say, give up all such ideas and say, 'I want Ramakrishna and Ramakrishna alone'." Yogin repeated the last sentence as many times as it was uttered by Girish Babu. At that moment somebody asked, "What do you see, brother?" Yogin said something. Swamiji was annoyed at that and said, "You are all strange people. Will you not give him peace? Why can't you, like G. C., repeat Lord's name to his hearing?" Then all started singing Lord's name and brother Yogin gave up his body. Then Swamiji tied a pugree, turban, round brother Yogin's head with his own hand, and started singing devotional songs to him.'

After Yogin Maharaj's passing away, Lātu Maharaj came to Belur Math and stayed there for a month and a half. And he saw there the great devotee, Nag Mahaśay. 'Nag Mahaśay came to see the new Math. When he saw Swamiji he said, "Today do I see Śiva incarnate." Swamiji said to us, "Mark, he is a householder, but in renunciation, in dispassion, in control over passions he is far superior to many Sannyasins. Just look at his peculiar attitude towards the world. He is unconscious of its existence, so absorbed he is in the Lord's remembrance." Once again did I see him (Nag Mahaśay). He came to see Mother at the Sarkarwadi lane house. That day also he was in the very same mood. Such modesty, such humility, such meekness of heart are rarely to be seen in man, said Lātu Maharaj.

'When brother Vivekananda left the Math I did not feel like staying there, I too came away. I came to Open (Upen) Babu's press. He requested me to be there as long as I liked and I stayed there.'

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Somebody asked, 'Why of all places, Maharaj, you selected a press as your dwelling place'?'

He replied, 'Why, what harm is there? I felt very comfortable at night. I used to spread my blanket on the big wooden boxes containing paper and lay down comfortably.'

'But there must have been noise, Maharaj.'

'Oh! yes, a little; but that did not disturb my meditation. A few employees used to respect and serve me well, and Open Babu loved me dearly. So I stayed there.'

'It is because you used to mix with the pressmen that decent people did not come to you. I have heard from Mr So-and-so, who said they were all rogues.'

'Yes, I did mix with them but how did he know they were rogues?'

'I shall explain to you, Maharaj. They were all bad characters, addicts to drink, gamblers; and so they were known as rogues. Isn't it? Why did you mix with such people?'

'But they were not double-dealers.'

Hearing this a gentleman was taken aback and has written a long note on this in his diary. From the note we take out the following:

'Lātu Maharaj would divide mankind into the categories: frank and sincere, and double-dealing. He loved and had all sympathy for the first group and would keep the other group at a long distance from him.'

While Lātu Maharaj stayed at the Basumati Press the following incident took place: One day at midnight — he was heard shouting at the top of his voice, 'Shut up, devil; you to threaten me, who am a child of Sri Ramakrishna; all your tricks and threats would be of no avail. Know it for certain.' Hearing him roaring like that, those of the press people who were sleeping and working in the adjacent rooms ran up to his room and saw Lātu Maharaj sitting up in "the heroic posture" with his eyes fixed in front and blazing like fire-balls. Seeing him in such a terrible mood they did not know what to say or do. At last one of them mustered courage to ask him, "Maharaj, whom are you shouting at at this dead of night. We see nobody around." Lātu Maharaj did not reply.'

Hearing this a man who knew passed the following remark: 'Do you know, such events are common in the lives of *sādhakas*? When Lord Buddha was engaged in austere practices for gaining illumination Mara tempted him in various ways. But Buddha remained unmoved. Those *sādhakas* who remain steadfast during the period of temptations gain the final illumination. Just look to our Purānic stories. How many times the celestial nymphs like Urvasi, Menaka, Rambha, Ghritachi tried their tricks on practising saints and sages! Whenever they were defeated Indra had hearty laughs at their cost. And when they remained unmoved and unmovable Indra used to shake in his shoes.'

Lātu Maharaj used to feed these employees of the press. He used to prepare with his own hands and feed them with boiled gram, boiled sweet potatoes, tea, halwa, etc. He used to purchase the raw materials out of the money he got unasked. Sometimes he would purchase *kachauri* seasoned with asafoetida. During the day he used to be on the bank of the Ganges; what would come to him during that time he would maintain himself with that. His usual daily ration was two or three cups of tea and boiled gram. When pressed hard, but very rarely, he would take one or two *kachauris* seasoned with asafoetida. Later he would not take them at all. He used to say, 'They are not for *sādhus* but for men of the senses'. Some of us used to cut jokes with him rather freely. He would never talk to us about morality or religion. When asked about these things his usual reply was: "First earn sufficient money, maintain your parents, let them have smiles on their face, then come to talk about religion or morality. In this Iron Age to serve one's parents is the greatest religion." He would say: "One should not come to practise religion by wounding one's parents' hearts. One must secure their permission first. Here are the examples of great souls. Śankaracharya took his mother's permission and then took Sannyasa. Lord Gauranga went so far as to marry in order to satisfy his mother."

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One day one of us pressed for being initiated by him. He said, "That is the work of an *ācharya*, I am not one. You may go to Swamiji. If he thinks you fit he may accept you." Thus did he by-pass such requests.' The above is what we heard from Patalbabu, manager of the Basumati Press.

At the end of 1899 the Basumati Press was shifted from the east of the Beadon Garden to Gray Street. We know from reliable sources that Lātu Maharaj did not go there.

From what we have been able to gather we can say Lātu Maharaj used to join the weekly session of the Ramakrishna Mission. One day Sri Sarat Chandra Chakravarthi came to Balaram Babu's house to speak on the Vedas. Lātu Maharaj told him, 'Sarot Babu, you will have many occasions to speak on the Veda but if such a great soul as Nag Mahaśay passes away you will have your life's remorse. So better start for Deobhog even today. He is dangerously ill, go and serve him to your heart's content.' Sarat Babu started for Deobhog that very night. Nag Mahaśay passed away within a month after this. Sarat Babu used to say, 'Lātu Maharaj had the power to know the future. He knew Nag Mahaśay would pass away soon; so he insisted on my going there immediately.'

In November, 1900, Haripada Maharaj records: Lātu Maharaj went to a village called Baganda. There he stayed for three or four days. He became very intimate with the village children. Throughout the day a train of tiny tots would be around him. He too joined freely in their shouts and frolics. Sometimes he would assume terrifying postures and the boys would be afraid; sometimes he would chase them and they would understand the mock nature of it but would enjoy flying away from him; sometimes he would play hide-and-seek; sometimes he would talk nonsense as one of them. The little ones were immensely happy in his company and would always be with him and give him no rest. They took him, in three or four days, to be so much their own that they would not hesitate to take all kinds of liberty with him — they would climb on his back and shoulders and pluck at his hair.'

In December he was at the Math, Belur. Haripada Maharaj says: 'When Swamiji left for the West for the second time, Lātu Maharaj used to mix with Sarat Maharaj very intimately. Sarat Maharaj would take him whenever he would go to Calcutta to deliver speeches. One day in one such meeting Sarat Maharaj spoke for two hours and got tired but the audience would not leave him; they went on putting questions to him to clear their doubts. Seeing this, Lātu Maharaj cried out, "Sarat, enough, enough. Stop it all now". A few in the audience did not like this interference and passed some uncharitable remarks. Undaunted, Lātu Maharaj met them and said, "I admit you love the speaker and want to hear more. But after two hours' continuous speaking when he would tomorrow have a bad throat, would you, dear ones, go to serve him at the Math?" He spoke these words with so much of sympathy and feeling that all had to admit that it was really wrong on their part to put so many questions on one day.

On ninth December, 1900 Swamiji all on a sudden burst into Belur Math. A householder devotee, who happened then to be at the Math, gave the following description of the funny incident:

'At night when some inmates of the Math had finished their meals and others were still at it, their gardener came and said, "Babu, an Englishman has come." Asking Bāburam Maharaj to go and welcome the gentleman others started guessing who that gentleman might be, coming at this unearthly hour. After a good deal of speculation it was decided that he must be some Western disciple of Swamiji. In the meantime Swamiji climbed over the gate and was already in the courtyard. When Bāburam Maharaj and his companion were halfway to the gate they met the strange guest. After an exchange of a few sentences in English the Sahib started talking in Bengali when Bāburam Maharaj complained smilingly, "What is this, Swamiji? What would you have lost if you had sent a cable earlier?" Anyway all ran up to meet the

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Swami. Lātu Maharaj was near the ghat (the landing place on the Ganges inside the Math). The householder devotee who had accompanied Bāburam Maharaj to welcome the Sahib ran up to Lātu Maharaj and conveyed the news. He expected Lātu Maharaj would also run to meet the Swami, but was surprised to see that not only did he show no sign of haste but he asked him to sit down there, 'at such a nice hour', to meditate — "Why show such urgency? Sit, sit down here. Look at the calm atmosphere and the calm Ganges. Meditate," said he. We can well imagine the plight of the devotee. He could not possibly disobey Lātu Maharaj, and his eagerness to hear Swamiji's talk was too great. Meanwhile Swamiji finished his spare meal and came to the ghat to meet Lātu Maharaj. Then they were found locked up in a deep embrace. After the exchange of a few words, Swamiji asked Lātu Maharaj: "Leto, what's the matter? All came to meet me and we chatted long and you did not turn up? Are you in a pique?" "Why, in a pique? My mind wanted to be here and I was here."

Swamiji said in answer, "Well, I heard you did not stay at the Math. Strange were your ways. There was no fixed place for your stay. How did you maintain yourself?" "Why, Open Mukherji helped me. On a day when food would not come unasked I used to stand near his shop. He would at once understand it and give me a four-anna or two-anna piece."

The moment Swamiji heard it he looked towards heaven and prayed, "My Lord, bless Upen, bless him." It is now in everybody's knowledge how this prayer was answered.

The moon was shining above. The Swami said, "Look at the silvery waves of the Ganges. The waves of the Nile in Egypt bear resemblance to these." Spending some time in such talks, Swamiji went upstairs to retire. Lātu Maharaj remained sitting there, soon absorbed in meditation. Next day at 4 a.m. when the householder devotee, with a letter from Rakhal Maharaj, was about to start for Balaram Babu's house and came to the ghat for a boat he found Lātu Maharaj still meditating in the same posture, on the same spot.

On February 6, 1901 when Belur Math was registered Swamiji wanted Lātu Maharaj also to be a Trustee; but Lātu Maharaj said, "Brother, I don't like all these. Don't entangle me in all these." Still Swamiji insisted, and said, "Do be in it; you will not have to be worried on this account. Please don't object, I put your name in the deed." I have heard Rakhal Maharaj also requested him. But with his characteristic firmness he resisted and said, "I will never be involved in all these affairs".

We narrate below a few incidents of this period. Swami Śuddhananda says, 'Though Lātu Maharaj could not himself read scriptures he evinced great interest in hearing them. He would ask others to read to him those books. The incident of one day I remember clearly. Then we used to sleep in the same room. At dead of night he got up and said "Sudhir, Sudhir, read the Gita". And I read it to him that night.'

Another incident narrated by Sarat Maharaj: 'A monk of the Math was reading the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* to Lātu Maharaj. When the reader came to the couplet "*anguṣṭha mātra*" etc. and pronounced "*pravṛhen-muñjādi-veṣikāṁ dhairyeṇa*" [i.e. with deep patience the soul should be taken out of (discriminated from) the body like the taking out of the soft innermost fibre from the rest of the *muñja* grass], Lātu Maharaj cried out, "Exactly exactly". He must have reached that state; otherwise he could not have understood the Sanskrit passage before it was rendered into Bengali.'

(To be continued)

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THE CONCEPT OF MAYA IN THE UPANIṢADS

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

THIS is a highly controverted question. The critics of Śri Śaṅkara maintain that the concept of Māyā, which is the keystone of his edifice of Advaita, finds no support in the classical Upaniṣads, of which that system purports to be a systematic formulation. They contend that the concept is wholly extraneous to those ancient treatises and that it is a pure invention of his. Some critics suggest that he has imported it from Buddhism, since it is powerfully reminiscent of the Mādhyamika Śūnya Vāda (*sarvam śūnyam*), especially of the statement of Nāgārjuna, in his *Mula Madhyama Karika,* that when we begin to reflect on things they give way and dissolve. Hence Śri Śaṅkara is charged by some of his uncharitable critics with being a Buddhist in disguise (*Praccanna bauddha*).[1] The attack against the concept is directed as much from the historical as from the doctrinal side. The critics are of the opinion that if they succeed in pulling it down the whole structure of Advaita will collapse like a house of cards.

Since our concern in this paper is with its historical aspect alone, we have to enter into a somewhat detailed and close examination of the essential teachings of the Upaniṣads. Paul Deussen who has made a careful study states, in his *Religion and Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, that though the concept of Māyā is not explicitly discussed in them, it is certainly implicit in their teachings and that it is the necessary, logical complement of the doctrine of the sole reality of Brahman taught in several texts. George Thibaut lends indirect support to this view in his own way. He thinks that though Śri Śaṅkara's doctrines of Nirguna Brahman and Māyā are not found in the Vedanta Sūtras they are certainly taught in the Upaniṣads which form the basis of the Sūtras. We may or may not agree with him in thinking that there is a rift between the Upaniṣads and the Vedanta Sūtras; we are only to note that in his view Śri Śaṅkara's philosophy is fully in accordance with the teachings of the Upaniṣads.

Before entering into an analysis of their main teachings, we may state that direct references to the term Māyā are not altogether absent in them. In the 'Madhu Vidya' we read: 'Indra (the Lord) appears in manifold forms by the powers of His Māyā'[2] (notions superimposed by ignorance). In the *Śvetāśwatara,* which though not a classical Upaniṣad is not a very late one, it is stated that Māyā is Prakṛti and its wielder is Īśwara.[3] The term 'avidyā' occurs in many contexts[4] in the Upaniṣads. Its connotation is the same as that of 'Māyā'. The only difference is in respect of its incidence. 'Avidyā' is the adjunct of the finite self (Jīva) while 'Māyā' is the adjunct of the Cosmic Self (Īśwara). By whatever name it is called, its function is the same. It conceals the true nature of an object and projects something totally different in its place. These two functions of concealing and projecting arise from its two powers known as *āvaraṇa śakti* and *vikṣepa śakti*. The statement, in the *Chandogya*[5] that 'true desires are *hidden* by the untrue' and that 'though people daily go to the region of Brahman, they know it not as they are carried away by the untrue' contains a reference to 'Māyā' though this term does not explicitly occur in it. True desires being *hidden* by untrue ones can only mean that the former are concealed by the power of Māyā. The finite self is in essence identical with Brahman but being deluded by

[1] Compare the saying:

मायावादं असच्छास्त्रं प्रच्छन्नं बौद्धमेवच

[2] *Br. Up.*, II. v. 19.

[3] IV. 10.

[4] *Isa*, 9; *Katha*, I. ii. 4; *Mundaka*, I. ii. 9 and *Br.* IV. iv. 10.

[5] VIII. iii. 2.

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primeval 'avidyā' it is unable to realize this. This is the import of that passage.

We may now take up for consideration the important and most purportful passages and see what they imply, what has necessarily to be assumed to make them intelligible. Among them the pride of place must be given to the statement which declares unequivocally that reality 'is one without a second'.[6] This passage is not content with saying that reality is one; it goes on to add that there is no second. This additional declaration is significant. It is meant to deny any kind of difference. A cow, for example, is different from a horse, different from other animals of the same species and there are also different limbs in its bodily organism. These differences must be kept in mind to know a particular cow properly. These differences may be termed external (*vijātīya*), internal (*sajātīya*) and organic (*svagata*). These differences must be kept in view to arrive at a clear knowledge of any object. We must know how it differs from objects belonging to another species, how, again, it differs from similar objects belonging to the same species and how it is diversified within itself. The point of the additional declaration in the passage quoted above is to deny these kinds of difference with regard to Brahman. These denials add emphasis to the first part of the passage. We are to understand, therefore, that Brahman is supreme, transcendent, indefinable, unclassifiable and beyond all relations.

It follows that only negative definitions are possible. Generally we define any object by reference to the higher genus to which it belongs and by stating the peculiar qualities which distinguishes it from the other similar objects comprehended under the same genus (*per genus et differentia*). But such a positive definition is out of the question so far as Brahman is concerned. We can therefore only say what it is not, and not what it is. Such negative definitions are found in the Upaniṣads in many contexts. There is first of all, Yājñavalkya's famous declaration, 'Not this, not this' (*neti neti*).[7] This clearly means that no quality that the human mind can think of, can possibly be predicated of Brahman. Nothing on this side of human experience, however refined or exalted, can be affirmed of it. There is no use placing a forced interpretation on this text. It neither means 'not *only* this, not *only* this' nor 'not that it is not'. Its plain meaning is that it is beyond thought and speech.[8] 'The eye goes not there, nor speech nor mind.'[9] Since it is attributeless it can only be described as neither gross nor subtle, neither short nor long, neither red nor any other colour, neither shadow nor darkness neither air nor ether'[10] and so forth.

As if to reinforce the statement that Brahman is the sole reality, the Upaniṣads proceed to declare that if this is known everything else is known. In two contexts[11] the question is asked about the Supreme Reality by knowing which one could claim to know everything else. The answer to these questions is found in Yājñavalkya's discourse to his wife: 'The Ātman, O Maitreyi, should be realized—should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon. By the realization of the Ātman through hearing, reflection and meditation, all this is known.'[12] What exactly does this declaration mean? How can one who has realized the Ātman claim knowledge of everything else? Broadly speaking we may say that in addition to the Ātman there are two other realities of which we are aware in our everyday experience, the world of inanimate things and a plurality of finite selves. We may assume that these two are either created by the Ātman or are its manifestations. Even so it is not easy to understand how by realizing the Ātman one can claim to know all things created by it or all the forms of finite through which it has manifested itself. There are no examples in support of such a contention. The potter creates pots with the help of clay, but since he is only the efficient cause, he

[6] *Chandogya*, VI. ii. 1.
[7] *Br. Up.*, IV. ii. 4.
[8] *Taitt. Up.*, II. 9.
[9] *Kena*, I. i. 3.
[10] *Br. Up.*, III. viii. 8. For similar negative descriptions see *Katha*, I. iii. 15; *Mandukya*, 7; *Taitt.*, II. 7; and *Sveta*, IV. 19.
[11] *Mund.*, I. i. 3 and *Ch.*, VI. 3. 5.
[12] *Br. Up.*, II. iv. 5.

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remains outside the articles he creates. By knowing him we cannot claim to know all about the earthenware he creates. Clay enters into the pots and jugs and the latter may be said to be the forms in which the former has manifested itself. But these are not the only manifestations of clay. It may take many other forms. And further, clay by itself is incapable of undergoing modifications. By knowing clay, therefore one cannot claim to know all its manifestations. It follows that neither the knowledge of the efficient cause by itself nor of the material cause by itself enables one to know all things that follow from them. We may combine the two causes in Īśwara so far as the world and the finite selves are concerned. Even so it does not follow that by knowing Īśwara one acquires knowledge of everything else since the knower remains outside the Īśwara whom he knows. The knower of Īśwara will cease to be an independent reality only if he *realizes* his identity with the latter. The identity can be realized only by removing all the adventitious adjuncts from both. After this removal only the spark of the spirit will remain. Both the sparks will merge in the Universal Spirit which is their source. Both jīva and Īśwara merge in Brahman. Nothing else then remains to be known.

This is the import of the Mahāvākyas found in the Upaniṣads. There are four of them, 'That thou art', 'I am Brahman', 'This Ātman is Brahman' and 'Consciousness is Brahman'. These are found in the *Chandogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Māṇḍūkya* and *Aitareya Upaniṣads* respectively. A full discussion of the import of these great sayings is outside the scope of this paper. It is enough if we add that they affirm the identity in essence between the finite self (Jīva) and the Supreme Self (Brahman). The identity is realized by the process of analysis and elimination. The spiritual element in both is stripped bare of all its material appurtenances. When the latter fall away, the spiritual element in both merge in their source, even as the reflected images of the sun merge in the latter when the water in the pools gets dried up.

So far we have shown that the finite souls do not stand over against Brahman as an independent reality, but are only mere appearances arising from an adventitious circumstance. There still remains the world of nature with all its manifold diversity. This is a given fact of experience. It is the scene of all our labours. We live and move and have our being in it. We are so closely bound up with it that its denial appears unimaginable. And yet the Upaniṣads proclaim: 'There is no diversity here.' This statement occurs in two contexts.[13] To reinforce this declaration the Upaniṣad goes on to add that the man who sees diversity goes from death to death. It means that only by realizing the sole reality of Brahman a man qualifies himself for release from the cycle of transmigration. Knowledge of the sole reality of Brahman makes for release while knowledge of diversity makes for bondage. As if to elucidate this point, the Upaniṣad adds that if a man sees even a second reality, fear arises for him.[14] Fear makes for bondage while utter fearlessness is the same as the state of Mokṣa.[15]

How can the world of diversity be conjured away? The Upaniṣads are clear in their declaration that so long as we carry the world with us, in its unmanifest or manifest form, there is no release from bondage. It must fall away and it will do so when we realize that it is a mere appearance arising from adventitious circumstances. We cannot get rid of it by trying to integrate it somehow with Brahman. It is the method of analysis and elimination that will avail and not the method of synthesis and reconciliation. In the rope-serpent illusion for example, we get to know the truth not by somehow connecting the latter with the former but by firmly rejecting it. A higher level of knowledge always results in the total rejection of the notions which we previously held. When we come to the waking state the lion that was pursuing us in dream simply disappears. We do not believe that it has taken shelter in some cave in the neighbourhood.

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13 *Katha*. II. i. 11 and *Br*.. IV. iv. 19.
14 *Taitt*.. II. 7 and *Br*., I. iv. 2.
15 *Br*., IV. ii. 4 and IV. iv. 25.

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The same thing takes place with regard to our knowledge in the waking state itself. Fresh discoveries in the field of science lead to the total rejection of the older theories. The old Ptolemaic Astronomy was simply put on the shelf when the fresh theory of Galileo and Copernicus took the field. There was no way of reconciling the two. Newton's laws of motion were given the go-by in the light of Einstein's theory of relativity. The theory of Evolution propounded by Darwin has been completely superseded by recent theories of emergent evolution. It is needless to add more examples.

The same law of replacement of old notions by new knowledge obtains in the field of spiritual experience also. The world with all the knowledge that has gathered round it in the shape of the sciences gets sublated when we rise to the unitary experience of the ground which underlies it. With the dawn of Brahman-realization, the world with all its variety ceases to be real. The realization of the 'One' precludes the possibility of the 'Many' also being equally real. But since the latter is an experienced fact, it cannot be dismissed as totally unreal like the hare's horn. Anything that is experienced even for a brief moment must be admitted to be so far real. But it has to be assigned a lower status when a higher level of knowledge with regard to the same subject arises in the same individual. Thus arises the theory of grades of reality and levels of experience. Śri Śaṅkara recognises three grades and three levels, the phenomenal (*prātibhāsika*), empirical (*vyāvahārika*) and and transcendental (*pāramārthika*). Illusions and dream experiences come under the first head, our waking experiences and all the knowledge that we acquire in that state come under the second. Our highest experience, Brahman-realization, comes under the last.

It is wrong to imagine that these three are three independent realities. Rather it is one and the same reality that appears differently under different conditions. Without undergoing the least change Brahman appears as the world of diversity at one level and as illusions and dream-experiences at a still lower level. The adventitious circumstance which is responsible for hiding the true nature of Brahman and showing it as something wholly different is called 'Māyā'. The conception is inherent in the essential teachings of the classical Upaniṣads. Without resorting to it, it is impossible to explain how one and the same reality can appear as the world of nature and as a multitude of finite selves. This is the only way by which we can reconcile our perceptual knowledge with the statements of the Upaniṣads that 'reality is one without a second' and that 'there is no diversity whatsoever'. In making use of this concept Śri Śaṅkara has neither introduced something of his own nor has he imported anything from Buddhistic sources. He has only brought to clear and explicit consciousness a concept that is germane to those sacred texts.

These texts are the utterances of renowned saints and sages. The eternal verities which flashed on their highly purified minds have been recorded exactly as they occurred to them. They did not reach them by processes of laborious reasoning. They took long jumps and assume many things for granted. They are content to leave them as they are and do not feel any obligation to indicate all the steps in the reasoning. This is the case with regard to all mystical experiences. They are a law unto themselves. They belong to a plane which far outstrips our usual mental processes. They are the eternal truths which are reflected in pure and immaculate minds like the human face in a clear mirror or trees in the limpid and still waters of a lake.

It is the task of the interpreter to supply the missing links and bring the teachings into a coherent whole. In doing this he must not start with pre-conceived notions. If his mind is already wedded to a theory he cannot resist the temptation to find support for it somehow from the texts. This may sometimes lead to a twisting and torturing of the texts. To avoid this danger he must keep aside all his predilections, read and re-read the texts in a spirit of reverence, allow the teachings to soak his mind and shape it into tune with their spirit. The interpreter, so fashioned, will simply act

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as their mouth-piece. The texts will, in reality, be speaking for themselves.

The interpretation of the texts in terms of the concept of Māyā is not, as we have seen, foreign to them. Under its influence Brahman, the one only reality, appears as knower and known, as subject and object, as so many finite selves and the world of diversity. Lower down the same reality appears as illusions. The doctrines of grades of reality is a natural corollary of the concept of Māyā. In the Upaniṣads there is reference to higher and lower knowledge. The four Vedas and the six Vedangas are comprised under the latter while the knowledge relating to the Imperishable which is beyond thought and word comes under the former.[16] Sanatkumara makes a sharp distinction between the various sciences which Narada had already mastered and the 'Bhūma Vidya' which he is going to impart. Sciences like Mathematics, Astronomy, Economics, Ethics, Politics do not avail since they do not help a man to overcome sorrow. Brahman knowledge takes man beyond the reach of sorrow. That makes all the difference. The former, therefore, belong to a lower grade. Brahma-vidya takes the pride of place.[17]

Closely allied to the doctrine of grades of reality is the concept of grades among the eligibles. *Adhikarins* are of three types, superior (*uttama*), middling (*madhyama*) and less than average (*manda*). It is an accepted principle of education that the instruction must be suited to the intellectual and moral attainments of the pupils and it must therefore be gradual. It is no use discoursing on the doctrine of the acosmic Absolute to students who are not qualified to grasp and profit by it. Such instruction will simply pass over the heads of the pupils. To the *adhikarins* of the lowest grade, Brahman must be taught as assuming a personal form and invested with several attributes such as punishing the wicked and rewarding the virtuous. To the *adhikarins* of the next higher grade Brahman appears as the Cosmic Absolute (Saguṇa Brahman) who creates the world, sustains it and ultimately reabsorbs it into Himself. Only to the highest *adhikarins* like Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumara can the doctrine of acosmic Absolute be taught. Thus all passages are accommodated. For this doctrine of *adhikaribheda* Śri Śaṅkara takes the cues again from the Upaniṣads themselves. We find it stated in several places that the teacher did not impart the highest instruction without first satisfying himself about the fitness of his pupils.[18] Yama makes a sharp distinction between the man whose eyes are turned inwards and the rest who are outward-looking. The former is characterised as a *dhīra*. He is intent on working for his abiding good (*śreyas*) and does not run after the momentary pleasures (*preyas*).[19] Yājñavalkya classifies people under two heads, those who are under the sway of desires and those who have risen to the state of utter desirelessness. The majority of the people are smitten by sundry desires and long for the good things of earth and heaven. The few who have transcended desires are those who have realized that the Ātman is the supreme object of desire.[20]

It is needless to multiply examples. Enough has been said to show that the concept of Māyā is by no means extraneous to the teachings of the classical Upaniṣads but quite native to their soil. Apart from the concept being a necessary and logical complement to them, the term itself finds explicit mention in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Śvetāśwatara Upaniṣads*. Its equivalent 'avidyā' is freely mentioned in several places. We may go further and say that there is an implicit reference to the concept of Māyā in some mantras of the Ṛg Veda. In the Nāsadīya Śūktā, for example, the question is raised about the origin of the world: 'Did it spring from existence or non-existence? Who can tell the truth about it? The gods had not then been born and hence it is no use looking to them for light in regard to this matter. Can even the Lord in Heaven enlighten us on this profound mystery?'

[16] *Mundaka*, I. i. 4-5.
[17] *Chandogya*, VII. i. 2. 4.
[18] *Katha*, I. i. 21-29; *Prasna*, I. 2; *Taitt.*, III. 1-6; *Chandogya*, VIII. viii-xi.
[19] *Katha*, II. i. 1-2.
[20] *Br. Up.*, IV. iv. 5-6.

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We may conclude by saying that any attempt to explain the teachings of the Upaniṣads without reference to the concept of Māyā will mean either ignoring several important passages or placing a most unnatural interpretation on them.

WOULD'ST THOU SEE GOD?

ERIC HAMMOND

"God cannot be seen so long as there is the slightest taint of desire."
—SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

Would'st thou see God? Is it thy life's desire
To gaze with eyes of thine
Into His holy eyes, nor fear their fire?
To brook the light divine
That falls and flashes from His faultless face,
Searching the inmost nook
Of all thy being, with all-seeing look?
Then learn of me how thou may'st gain that grace.

Would'st thou, indeed, see God? Could'st thou endure
To stand, unrobed and bare
Body and soul, in His pure presence, sure
And unashamed? — There;
Where knowledge dwells of deeds that thou hast done;
And where thine every thought
Into the radiance of His light is brought?
These lips of mine point out the way. 'Tis one.

One, and one only. Lo! the path is plain;
Love not the love of life;
Love not the world nor any worldly gain;
Play no part in the strife
For fame or high estate; but these disdain,
And hold them of light worth.
Then shalt thou learn the lesson of new birth,
And, in his beauty, see the king, and reign.

Thus, while within thee one desire shall stay
Of lesser, lower sort
Than God Himself, thou can'st not trace the way.
Awake! Be not the sport
Of petty passions, little lusts or great.
Lift up thy heart, and take
Control of all thy senses; that they make
No slave of thee, their head. Then, fear no fate.

— (Reproduced from the *Brahmavādin*, November 1, 1897)

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REALIZATION OF THE INFINITE

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THE one thing that has been discussed by all the different scriptures and Yogas is the theme of realization of that infinite perfection which is within us. We are made of the divine Element, every atom within us is nothing but Divinity itself, but somehow or other we have forgotten that, and we act as if we were so many 'forlorns', wandering aimlessly on the face of the earth.

Have we any idea right now what that divine Substance is? That divine Substance is our consciousness, our consciousness in its pristine state. That intelligence, that Chit, as it is called in the Sanskrit language, finds expression through different instruments. Now, whatever attributes we can think of as pertaining to Divinity apply also to our consciousness. We think Divinity is omnipotent, omniscient, immortal, and so on. All these qualities could be affirmed of our consciousness. Consciousness proper has all these attributes, but when that consciousness expresses itself through different instruments it appears in a limited form; it seems to take upon itself the limitations of the instruments. Suppose I raise a pencil in the air. It is consciousness that raises the pencil up. It is consciousness proper, working through the instrumentality of this mechanism, but seeing this action no one will think it is omnipotent. Why not? *Because we do not identify that Source with the action.* We do not understand the power which acts through the instrumentality of the mechanism.

Consciousness proper, in its own state, without superimpositions, separated from the attributes of the instruments, can be understood, realized, only by the process of meditation. We talk of meditation, and that by meditation one gains the knowledge of that divine Substance. Actually, meditation is the process of eliminating all sorts of distorting conditions that interfere with that ever-present pristine consciousness in so many different forms. In the process, first of all you shut the doors of sensation. If you are able to do that you find your consciousness in a different state. Think of the vast background of consciousness with five openings. If you keep these open you get nothing except what appears through the openings. If you close the openings you find consciousness in a more concentrated form. You may think that during sleep the five openings are closed, yet we are not aware of the consciousness. In the practice of yoga we have to learn to keep awake while the senses 'sleep'. Well, suppose you have been able to close the five openings voluntarily, and your five senses are not registering anything, still there are forms that limit the consciousness. In your memory there are impressions; your eyes do not see now, but you think of things you saw. These impressions are like stamps that give form and colour on the background of Chit. You are then conscious of nothing but impressions and that Chit still appears with the limitations of those impressions. As you proceed in this process of meditation, eliminating as you go, you finally get what you already had. The process of attaining our divine nature is the process of elimination, getting rid of the limiting conditions. We are That now, but we do not recognize it. By the process of elimination of the limiting conditions and qualities, we recognize what we all the time are.

You are taught to get rid of desires, to practise non-attachment, and so on. What is the aim? You may think, why is it necessary to be desireless? The reason is that your consciousness has been limited by what you possess and what you want to possess. By possessing only a little bit you are depriving yourself of the Whole. By stamping your self-consciousness with your little objects of

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possession, and desires to possess, you have become small like them. If you want to attain that Substance, your own pristine consciousness, in its totality, then get rid of those stamps. They deprive you of your Self. Yoga teaches you to remain above that stamping of the self-consciousness. That is why it emphasizes the need for disciplining yourself by the practice of non-attachment and desirelessness. Know that you are not the action, not the desire, not what you express, but you are that Substratum which expresses itself in all these functions. Always think of yourself as that which expresses itself in the expression. When we identify our self with the expression we limit our self.

> 'Sever thy craving for the sense objects which are like poison, for it is the very image of death, and giving up thy pride of caste, family and order of life, fling actions to a distance. Give up thy identification with such unreal things as the body and the rest, and fix thy mind on the Atman. For thou art really the Witness, the Brahman, unshackled by the mind, the One without a second, and Supreme.'[1]

You may think, why should we 'sever the cravings for sense objects'? Well, enjoy them if you wish, but you are depriving yourself of your heritage. If you want to extend your possessions into the All, do not be satisfied with a little. As soon as you accept a little you have deprived yourself of the Infinite. From the viewpoint of Bhakti this has been beautifully illustrated :

A king was laying out a park near his palace. Many labourers were working on the job. They were working for wages as modern men do and they had the idea of less hours and more pay too! There was one man who worked, why, nobody knew. He worked every day but he was never found in the line of men waiting to receive their daily wages. He worked and disappeared. Everyone noticed him. They thought, what is the matter with him? Gradually he became the talk of the gang of labourers. One day someone reported it to the king. The king enquired and found that he was the best worker of the lot. He asked the man, 'Why do you work? What do you want?' The man answered, 'I want nothing; I work because I like to work'. The king became interested in him and later on made him his first Minister. (This is a story to illustrate a point. Don't think I am advocating less pay and longer hours for workers!) Yoga teaches you to refuse the little and gain the all. If I ask for a penny you will throw me one and there our friendship will end. If you look at the little with wistful eyes, it will be thrown at you with contempt.

'Giving up thy pride' : Anything you consider as yourself, anything you attach to yourself, only limits you. Another stamp is impressed on your consciousness and you are that. You think of yourself 'I am tall, I am rich, I am well-born,' and so on. Giving up means to refuse to stamp yourself with these things.

'Fling actions to a distance' : The identification with action limits our scope. If I think my power is raising this pencil I limit myself. Flinging actions to a distance does not mean sitting down and being negative, but to know that as long as you act and think you are acting you are responsible for your actions. Wisdom is a good thing when it has been attained by a gradual process of learning.

'Give up thy identification', etc. When we consider this body as ourselves we are limited by the qualities of it. We attribute the qualities of the body to the Self. That is the reason we must 'give up'.

'Fix thy mind,' etc. The Atman is the subject, the Entity for which the body, mind and so on act. Think of your self as that Entity and the body, mind, faculties, as so many servants. Or think of this body as the temple, and the Atman the Deity. The Deity does not act. It is for the worship of the Deity that these faculties are working. This will bring us to the consciousness of the aloofness of the Subject. That must be done. Do it from the viewpoint of any Yoga — Bhakti, temple and worship of the Deity; Jnana, Atman, Subject

[1] *Vivekachudamani*, 377.

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and objects. A shadow of a thing is not the thing itself. We forget for whose benefit the faculties are functioning.

Some verses are for repetition. It is good to repeat them even without being able to comprehend their full significance. Repetition of a great statement, assertion, a great affirmation, helps to register it in the consciousness. These verses are to be repeated. Each verse is the repetition of the same thing. Thou Art That, the same one thing from different angles. Thou art the Witness. That Witness is your Self, that which sees everything. It is all-knowledge, but it does not take any part in any action or thought. This has to be impressed in the consciousness, this has to be realized. I have told you the story of the great Yogi, Swami Turiyananda, who had an operation performed on his body. He withdrew his consciousness from that part of his body and the operation was carried out without any anaesthetic. He said that he saw the operation as something outside himself. There was a Witness within which saw the operation, but it was not a party to it.

> 'Fixing thy mind firmly on the Ideal, Brahman, and restraining the external organs in their respective centres; with the body held steady, and taking no thought for its maintenance; attaining the idenitty with Brahman and being one with It, always drink joyfully of the Bliss of Brahman in thy own Self, without a break. What is the use of other things which are entirely hollow?'[2]

What is the Ideal? It is realization of that one, divine, infinite Principle as your own Self. We are all labouring under a misconception — identification of our self with something which is not our self. 'Restraining means concentrating. You must not allow the organs to bring home any stimuli. If they are not allowed to flow outward they will flow inward.

'No thought for its maintenance,' etc. It is love for the container of this individualized self that is the hindrance. To get ready to die is a great achievement. You will find how many limitations you will get rid of. One who will not be satisfied with anything but Brahman will not care what happens to this body. Those who have realized the Truth have always said that they did not care how this body fared. That this body is our self is the greatest superstition that ever was. Think of how much attention we give it. We bathe it, feed it, clothe it, beautify it, and so on, day after day, for the whole of our lives! And then, how we fear to leave it! There must come a time when we feel that for the realization of the Truth we do not care what happens to the body.

'Attaining the identity with Brahman': That is our goal, and that is Samādhi. When the identification with Brahman has been established the result is the enjoyment of infinite Bliss. Sri Ramakrishna said that even if you could multiply the sense enjoyments a thousand times it would not be any where near the Bliss which is felt in Samādhi. The greatest teachers have described it in this way: that there could not be anything to compare with that state. And right here one can attain that. After the attainment of Samādhi the subcurrent remains powerful, no matter what the body does. As Sri Ramakrishna humorously said, 'When once you have eaten sugar candy (a kind of Indian sweet) do you really care any more for common molasses? When one gets the taste of realization of that Inner Bliss what does one care for outer things? When you have heard the music of divine musicians could you any more be enchanted by the song of the sirens?

[2] *Ibid.*, 378.

If you accept the Nitya, you must also accept the Lila. It is the process of negation and affirmation. You realize the Nitya by negating the Lila. Then you affirm the Lila, seeing in it the manifestation of the Nitya. One attains this state after realizing Reality in both aspects: Personal and Impersonal. The Personal is the embodiment of Chit, Consciousness; and the Impersonal is the Indivisible Satchidananda.

— SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

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DO MYSTIC OR MORAL VALUES GOVERN HUMAN SOCIETY?

K. P. S. CHOUDHURY

THE entire structure of the human society is based fundamentally upon two words — 'I' and 'You'. In a metaphysical sense the idea of 'I-ness' is not possible unless there is something other than 'myself'. 'You' always implies 'I' in opposition to it. Society, therefore, is a sum total of 'I' and 'You' in its widest application and operation. In the primitive stage of human evolution, the word 'society' had a very narrow and limited connotation. In its crude sense, it meant a collection of persons who lived in any place or at any period of time having common manners, customs and perhaps, in a vague way, some sort of common belief or religion as well.

Society is, however, governed by organic laws. It has its development; it has its decay. In the process of human evolution we find society undergoing various changes. From family-life it grew into village-life, from village-life it grew into clan-life, from clan-life it grew into tribal-life and then into national-life. It aims now at an international life, and when it does succeed in realizing its goal, it will be the culmination and fulfilment of the human life, ambition and purpose. Indeed, in the ancient Indian scriptures we find that the idea of oneness with all human beings had been carried still further. The saying, '*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*' encompassed within its fold kinship of all created beings. Human duties and responsibilities, according to the great Ṛṣis, neither began with nor ended in human beings. They gave a magnificent rallying call to all humanity to live in harmony with all creation, sentient and insentient.

Let us travel back for a while to ascertain from historical records what was the state of society in its earliest formative period. It goes without saying that the contrast between a cave-man and a cosmonaut is very vast and impressive. A naked hunter with an instrument of stone or steel roaming about in jungles for food and shelter either singly or collectively presents quite a different picture from that of a man going about in a luxurious car fitted with the most up-to-date mechanical contrivances, from one part of some splendid city to another or flying in the outer space in a spaceship to reach the Moon or Mars. The comparison is not only intellectual. Robinson Crusoe was not a freak of nature. He showed marks of a more integrated conscious human personality than the cave-man. With the physical growth or development goes mental growth or development. It is said in the Bible that Jesus grew in stature and wisdom. It emphasizes the point that as in the case of individuals so also in the case of the race, growth is a process, slow or rapid, from stage to stage and also from order to order. From monkey to man, a whole range of transition is covered. Primitive people had not shed much of their animality in them.

The organic laws which we have spoken of before are primarily the Law of Inheritance and the Law of Environment. They determine to a very large extent growth, development and special characteristics of man. Besides these, there are mystic and moral laws which govern human action and relation. Even among people whom we call savages, there is some sense of morality, some consciousness of what is right and what is wrong.

Now, let us consider a few other matters of history. There were some customs among all races which from the present standard look obnoxious. As society became more conscious of higher values of life, it found such practices repugnant and abhorrent and did away with them. As we advance from one age to another — be it stone-age, or iron-age, or

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steel-age or the present age — we find that the moral values are changing. What was the cause that led to this gradual yet constant change? It is, in essence, 'the metaphysical opposition of person to person', as we have indicated before, 'which allows the real ethical relationship to arise, from which again, all human resolutions and actions result'.

Both egoism and altruism have independent roots in man. We are individual beings as well as communal beings. What we do, not only concerns us but also the society and the race. From the animal state to his present state, man presents a grand transition and transformation and within the context of human personality. He represents a growth, a development, nay a building up of his whole moral consciousness. With each step towards advancement he evolves laws and rules to regulate and govern his own conduct and that of his society and also of the relation between one and the other. So, we find that man had to struggle hard to achieve what he has achieved in the course of so many centuries.

Impending chaos and bewildering confusion have given place to law and order. But the task is not yet finished. It is a never-ending process. There have been, and there are philosophers who have asserted that they do not know what good and evil are. It is a gigantic task to analyse the contents of mystical or moral values. Ethical standards by which they are judged are so many and so conflicting that one does not know really what is right and what is wrong. However, from all the bewildering masses of conflicting opinions and views, we gather that whatever changes in the contents of morality might be, there is always some sort of moral or ethical standard which constitutes the bed-rock of the problem viz., 'what ought we to do?'

The little thought that we have given to this subject leads us to the conclusion that the higher up and up we go in the social scale, the stricter and more compelling are the laws and regulations that we subject ourselves to. From unlimited number of assertions and tyrannies, we have come to self-sacrifice. These self-restraining laws represent not only so many mile-posts in the progress and achievements of human race and human society but a distinct advancement towards the grand destiny that mankind has placed before itself. The faith in that destiny, real or illusory, in either case, has fulfilled a marvellous function. But 'whether every advance is progress', is a different matter. Our society is not a perfected scheme and we do not know all there is to know about basic values. Continuous growth seems to be the purpose of our life. This idea has been very magnificently and eloquently expressed by Tennyson: 'Through the ages one increasing purpose runs; and the thoughts of men are widened with the processes of the suns.' It follows from what he says that growth is not a haphazard development; it is rather a calculated search for perfection requiring new powers of vision, intelligence and flexibility of mind so that we could appreciate the way in which the modern world is moving, and adjust our course of action accordingly. In other words, for human social development we have to make a several-pronged assault to clear the way.

To believe in God, according to some, is to give oneself to religion and to the knowledge of good and evil. The materialists adhere to the view that the results are all that matters. Whichever view one holds, we have got to fashion our life according to certain ideals; and when we save a drowning man, or feed a starving man, we feel elevated; we do feel that man, in order to justify that he is of a higher order than animals, must live not only for himself but for the society as well. But this is easier said than done. To be serviceable to others, one has to school and train oneself. He must first of all make a man of himself. The more disciplined, the more balanced and the more capable he is, the more useful, the more admirable and adorable he will be.

To know whether human action is good or evil, we must have recourse to moral laws. Whatever changes there have been in the contents of values from age to age, at no period of time in human society, charity, chivalry,

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self-sacrifice, purity etc. have ever lost their moral values. But what is morally good or bad can only be taught by ethics. There is no word in the English language, however, which expresses the idea of morality so appropriately and comprehensively as the Sanskrit word 'Dharma'. Dharma is derived from the root—'Dhṛi'—which means 'to sustain'. In Sanskrit terminology anything that sustains the society is Dharma. Conversely, anything which tends to harm it, is 'Adharma'.

If we stretch the language a little more, we perceive that Dharma or Law or regulation can be judged in the light of morality only in reference to our actions in relation to ourselves or others. In the very nature of things, the definition of Dharma can only be functional. Manu, our great Law-giver says that Dharma is known by ten characteristices. They are — (i) fortitude (courage, endurance), (ii) knowledge, (iii) forgiveness, (iv) discipline, (v) bravery, (vi) truth, (vii) purity, (viii) restraint upon sense-organs, (ix) sacrifice, and (x) absence of anger. Any of these qualities in a man can only be discernible in his actions. Moral and mystical consciousness in this sense is never complete, perhaps never free from error in its application, i.e. in the actual valuation which it confers upon actions and dispositions. Nevertheless it is always a genuine consciousness of values. While some say that it is never found in actual human conduct or in adjustments and historical phenomenon of human society, there seems to be no escape from the evidence of everyday life that there is the primary consciousness of good and evil in all human actions. The social structure and cultural character will immediately go to pieces the moment the consciousness of ethical value is lost. It is an obscure, hazy consciousness in the beginning. As it grows it is accompanied by a feeling of value. This moral consciousness consists not of resolutions and dispositions but of the distinctive and also perhaps instinctive sensing of values.

Let us now turn our attention to what the Lord says in the Gītā. In essence He says that whenever and wherever there is a decay of Dharma, suitable personalities are thrown up by the Cosmic Force to reconstruct that Dharma. Dr. Radhakrishnan writes in his translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā,* 'Wherever there is a serious tension in life, when a sort of all-pervasive materialism invades the hearts of human souls, to preserve the equilibrium, an answering manifestation of wisdom and righteousness is essential.' (p-154) By efflux of time many great and good things have fallen into decay. Śri Krishna Himself had had to face the challenge of His corrupting time. When Christ came, He said that He had not come to destroy the Laws but to purge the society as He found it from all its impurities even by offering His life-blood. Coming down through the corridor of time to our own, what is the state of society that we find ourselves in? Human social structure appears to be in great ferment at present which can only be guided by religion, by moral and spiritual values.

Religion is not merely a creed or dogma. It is not only a system of thought either. It is an active faith in the moral values of human actions. A sense of public morality has got to be inculcated at this stage of evolution of our society. Every well-wisher of the country, every son and daughter of this great country who can rise above communalism, casteism, provincialism, must exert and exercise himself or herself to the utmost capacity to save the society from its spiritual death. The chaff must be removed from the wheat. Let not our actions be such as to blur the vision for mystic values, for they are the guiding spirit and shaping force of mystical life. We command the deep respect of the world not because of our military strength, nor because of our huge population but because of the great personalities like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Vivekananda, Maharshi Ramana, Sri Aurobindo and others like them who have brought to the modern world an exalted conception of man's purpose in life and a mighty transformation and vital vindication of our ancient mystical and moral values, which in the true sense of the term govern human society.

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RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

Characteristics of Citta

The following are the characteristics of *citta* according to Dasgupta : (*a*) It is incessantly suffering changes like the flame of a lamp. (*b*) It contains the capacity of perceptions and like functions. (*c*) It contains within it the root-impressions (*saṁskāras*) and the tastes and instincts or tendencies of all past lives. These *saṁskāras* are revived under suitable associations. Every man has had infinite numbers of births in the past as man and as animals also. In all these lives the same *citta* has always followed him. The *citta* has thus collected within itself the instincts and tendencies of all those animal lives. (*d*) *Citta* possesses volitional activity by which the conative senses are brought into relation to their objects. (*e*) *Citta* has the potential capacity to restrain itself and change its course and continue to persist in any direction. (*f*) *Citta* creates a world of its own and therefore for the plurality of *puruṣas* there are different worlds, each individual having its own.[28]

Stages of Citta (Cittabhumi)

According to Vyāsabhāṣya, there are five stages of *citta*, namely, *kṣipta* (unstable mind like that of a child), *mūḍha* (confused or obscure mind generally swayed by emotions), *vikṣipta* (sometimes stable due to some idea possessing an individual and sometimes unstable due to diseases, doubt, illusion, etc.), *ekāgra* (mind fixed on a single point, a man possesses the idea instead of being possessed by it), and *niruddha* (completely restrained mind).

Out of these five stages, the first two, viz., *kṣipta* and *mūḍha* have nothing to do with Yoga. In the *vikṣipta* stage, the *citta* is occasionally and provisionally fixed through the exercise of attention on some problem. It is subject to distraction and, so, it cannot be properly called Yoga. Vyāsa considers the *ekāgra* and the *niruddha* stage to be proper yoga. In *ekāgra* stage, the mind is single-in-intent, it fully illumines a distinct and real object ; the five hindrances dwindle and it sets before it as a goal the restriction of all the modifications of *citta*. This is called the *saṁprajñāta* stage. The *citta* is still not completely retrained because of the presence of the feeling of personality (*asmitā*) and thoughts about subtle objects in it. When there is the complete restriction of all the *vṛttis* of *citta* and there is no consciousness of an object, *asaṁprajñāta samādhi* is attained. To attain this stage an aspirant is expected to be equipped with strong desire to attain it, strong will and keen intelligence.

Classification of Vrittis

A *vṛtti* is a function of *citta* which leaves behind certain *saṁskāras*. These *vṛttis* are of five kinds, viz., *pramāṇa* (right knowledge), *viparyaya* (indiscrimination), *vikalpa* (verbal delusion), *nidrā* (sleep) and *smṛti* (memory). These *vṛttis* may again be *kliṣṭa* or *akliṣṭa*. When they are the field for growth of the accumulation of the latent deposits of karma and take us towards the world and produce tendencies of merit, demerit and desires, they are called *kliṣṭa*. The *akliṣṭa vṛttis*, by checking the functions of the three guṇas, e.g., desire, anger, greed etc., create a discriminative discernment which enables us to distinguish between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and, thus, they take us towards isolation (*mukti*). It is to be remembered that in *nirbīja samādhi* even the *akliṣṭa vṛttis* are suppressed.

[28] *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I. pp. 262, 263, 264.

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Pramāṇas are of three kinds, namely, direct perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*) and competent evidence (*āgama*). If these evidences prove the existence of the world to us, then we are led to bondage; but if they prove the temporary and evanescent nature of this world creating *vairāgya* or renunciation for the world in us, they lead to *kaivalya*. *Viparyaya* (illusion) is false knowledge not established in real nature (Y.S. 1-8). If we take the universe as an illusion, we shall be heading towards liberation. *Vikalpa* (hallucination) flows from words having no corresponding reality. We have to save ourselves from falling into hallucinations. Sleep, when *tāmasik*, debars our practice and all good attempts. It is not to be condemned but regulated. The *Gītā* expects moderation in sleep and wakefulness from an aspirant of yoga (II-69, VI-17). Memory, which depends on the *saṁskāras*, should not lead us towards attachment to the world, but, should develop in us a tendency towards renunciation.

The *vṛttis* leading to bondage can be controlled, positively, by practice of concentration on the chosen object for a long period of time and, negatively, by non-attachment to things, which vitiate our attention. Yoga demands *paravairāgya* (complete renunciation) of the three gunas without which there is no possibility of attaining yoga.

Obstacles to Concentration

The obstructive distractions (*cittavikṣepa*) to yoga are disease, mental laziness, doubt, lack of enthusiasm, stupor, false perception etc. There are certain accompanying distractions (*sahabhuvaḥ*) to the above distractions. They are grief, mental distress, tremor of the body, irregular breathing etc. Therefore, the first duty of an aspirant is to do away with both the *cittavikṣepa* and *sahabhuvaḥ* and attain a sound body and sound mind.

The above distractions can be removed by concentration on the object of choice (Y.S. I-39), cultivation of friendship with all, mercy to the poor and suffering and constant practice of *prāṇāyāma*. In addition to the above, the cultivation of *viṣayavatī pravṛtti* (by which we experience the extra-ordinary sense-perceptions as a result of concentration, e.g., after concentration on the tip of the nose for sometime a man begins to smell wonderful perfumes), *viśokāpravṛtti* (the tendency to be beyond pleasure and pain), *vītarāgavṛtti* (an attitude of non-attachment) and thinking of the presence of God before us and meditating on Him, will favour concentration and perseverance of mind.

The practice of such virtues prepares man for perfect concentration. By winning over the above stated obstructions, a man becomes so capable that he can concentrate at any time, at any place and on any object of his choice.

Astanga Yoga

A human being is a body-mind-complex-continuum. *Citta* is contained in a body and thus the body cannot be ignored. Yoga prescribes an approach from the lowest rung of the ladder i.e., the body to the highest rung i.e., *buddhi* and *saṁskāras*. Patañjali, to gain the goal of the inhibition of the fluctuations of the mind-stuff, speaks of the famous *aṣṭānga yoga*. The eight limbs of yoga are *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi*. Aspirants are required to go through these stages in order to reach the stage of *samādhi* or perfect concentration.

According to the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* the Self is manifested in five *kośas* (sheaths). *Annamayakośa* is the material self or the *sthūlaśarīra*. *Prāṇamayakośa* is the vital self. *Manomayakośa* is the psychological self. *Vijñānamayakośa* is the intellectual self. The vital, psychological and intellectual self together are called the *sukṣmaśarīra*. *Ānandamayakośa* is the spiritual self or the *kāraṇaśarīra*. Man has all these five elements in his being. The *aṣṭānga yoga* offers means to control the body and mind at all the five levels. *Āsanas* regulate the body of the *sthūla* stage; *Prāṇāyāma* controls the *prāṇamayakośa* (vital self) and *yama* and *niyama* perfectly subdue

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our *manomaya* (psychological) and the *vijñānamayakośas* (intellectual self). *Dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi,* technically called *saṁyama* in the *Pātañjala yoga* (III-4), purify our Buddhi (III-5). As compared to *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma* and *pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi* are the internal means to *samādhi* (III-7). But, even these internal means are leading only to *sabīja samādhi,* and therefore, so far as *nirbīja samādhi* is concerned, they are treated as external means (III-8). The ultimate aim is *nirbīja samādhi* when the mind is completely devoid of *vṛttis,* and is full of only God-idea (I-51). At this stage a man attains *puruṣa*-hood i.e., gets liberation or *kaivalya* and he controls *prakṛti* instead of being controlled by it.

Let us now examine the various factors of the *aṣṭānga yoga. Yama* are five in number, namely, *ahiṁsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya* and *aparigraha.* These practices called *mahāvrata* (the great oaths) are universal, and therefore, to be practised by all aspirants irrespective of time, place, caste and country (II-30-31). *Niyama* are also five, viz., *sauca* (internal and external purification), contentment, *tapas,* study and worship of God (II-32). Both *yama* and *niyama* are the moral precepts and the laws of conduct as well. They prepare an aspirant from the viewpoint of his individual and social activities. When these ten moral commandments of yoga are observed, they create certain tendencies in an aspirant which are favourable to yoga. By the practice of *ahiṁsā* all enmity vanishes in the presence of an aspirant. A tiger will not be ferocious and will not be an enemy of a lamb. In the presence of a yogin, the fearful world will become friendly not only to the yogin, but also with one another (II-35). By the practice of *satya,* the yogin gets the power of attaining for himself and others the fruits of work, without being active (II-36). In this way, by the practice of these vows an aspirant gains some extrasensory and extraordinary powers.

The practice of the above rules of conduct is a bit difficult because of the conservative and downward tendency of human nature. But, psychologically, by *pratipakṣabhāvanā* (suggestion and substitution of new ideas) we can win over such obstacles (II-23). This is the sublimation of our energy towards better goals.

The observation of the rules of conduct cannot be dispensed with by an aspirant at any stage of yoga, whether the beginning or the end. The goal of perfection can be reached only by perfect chastity in thought word and deed. A perfect yogin is required to be active even after the attainment of *samādhi.* He performs activities for *lokasaṁgraha.* Thus, morality can never be divorced from yoga. Vivekānanda thinks that without perfect chastity the practice of rāja yoga is dangerous and may lead to insanity.[29]

ĀSANA

Āsanas provide regulation of our body and mind. Numerous postures have been developed to give exercises to the different parts of our body. They form a science by themselves called the Hatha Yoga. The main object of a *hatha yogin* is strength and long life of the body. But what we are concerned here is the sitting posture, a posture for meditation. It is an easy posture that Patanjali prescribes. *Āsana* will become firm and pleasant by slight effort and meditation on the unlimited. The practice of *āsana* will enable us to conquer the dualities of cold and heat, good and bad etc. (II-46, 47, 48).

(*To be continued*)

[29] *Raja Yoga,* p. 48.

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, THE UNIVERSAL TEACHER OF MEN

[This writing on Swami Vivekananda has been gathered from two sources. It contains a rendering of an article captioned 'Swamijir Sandhane' by 'Tirtha-madhupa', appearing in the Swami Vivekananda Centenary number of the *Udbodhan*, the Bengali monthly organ of the Ramakrishna Order. And to this is added some reminiscences of Miss MacLeod appearing in the November and December, 1949, issues of the *Prabuddha Bharata*. We are thankful to Swami Shantaswarupananda, Minister, Vedanta Society, Berkeley, California, U.S.A., for preparing the article in this form from the sources mentioned above. It was read by a student at the annual pilgrimage in Olema Retreat, in which some hundred Vedanta students of Northern California participated.]

As a young man I heard that there were people still living, not far away from where I lived, who had seen Swami Vivekananda. I felt a strong desire to meet them. I went to the Belur Monastery, and the first monk I saw there was Jnān Mahārāj, who, I heard, was a disciple of Swamiji. But I only saw him without having an opportunity to talk with him. I returned home with the idea that at least I had seen one who had known Swamiji.

Another day I heard that Swami Suddhananda, a disciple of Swamiji, was staying at Advaita Ashrama in Calcutta. I also learnt that he spoke of Swamiji freely whenever asked about him. One day I went to him. After bowing at his feet and exchanging a few words with him I said regretfully, 'Swami, we are very unfortunate that we could not see Swamiji. If we had been born a few years earlier we could have seen him easily.'

He replied, 'It is good that you did not see him!' 'Why do you say that, Swami?' I asked.

'Let me tell you what happened to me,' said the Swami. 'At one time I was in the Belur Monastery attending upon Swamiji. I had to be with him day and night. One morning a young man came and asked him, "Swamiji, isn't it true that you have preached a new religion both here and abroad?"

'Swamiji enquired, "What do you mean by a new religion?" The young man replied, "You do not support the belief that bathing in the Ganges brings liberation to men."

'Swamiji said: "What do you say! I bathe in the Ganges every day. When that is not possible, at least I sprinkle some Ganges water on my head and into my mouth." The young man appeared to understand what Swamiji meant and went away.

'After a while, an elderly Brahmin came and said, "Swamiji, you have preached our eternal Hindu religion all over the world. Blessed are you!"

'Swamiji asked, "What do you mean by eternal Hindu religion?" The Brahmin replied, "Take for instance the belief that if one dies in Benares one attains liberation. You believe in that, do you not?"

'Swamiji said: "No, there is no liberation without knowledge. A man of knowledge, wherever he may die, will get liberation. I would, therefore, ask you to cultivate knowledge. I always practise it."

'I was just struck dumb,' continued Swami Suddhananda, 'by these two contradictory teachings to two different people. I knelt before him and said, "Swamiji, these two people have now gone their way; but I am left here in a state of utter confusion."

'Swamiji replied, "Ask whatever question you have, and you will get the answer just suited to you." So I asked, "Please tell me how I can attain liberation." Swamiji looked at me solemnly and said, "Through service to the Guru."'

After some days I heard that Miss Josephine Macleod, an American disciple of Swamiji, had come to the Belur Math. She was about

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ninety years old. I went to see her one winter evening and found her sitting in a reclining chair with her body covered by a shawl. I paid her my respects and as soon as I had taken a seat she said, 'People say I am old, but I do not consider myself old. I am a young woman of forty-five. Do you know why? I count my age from the day I first saw Swamiji. That was really the beginning of my life.' As she uttered these words, the wonderful young lady tried to sit up straight in the chair, and her face lighted up with a benign smile. Her eye-sight, though dim, had a brightness in it, and her wrinkled face was as guileless as that of a child. She continued: "They say that I am a disciple of Swamiji, but they do not know. Swamiji used to call me his friend. Do you know? I love those who love Swamiji, and I love them with all my heart. It is for this reason that I come running back here every year.'

In her reminiscences of Swamiji, Miss Macleod said: 'One day I went with a friend to Swamiji and said, "Swami, will you tell us how to meditate?" He said, "Meditate on the word Om for a week and come again and tell me." So after a week we went back and my friend said, "I see a light." He said, "Good, keep on." "O no, it is more like a glow at the heart." And he said to me, "Good, keep on." That is all that he ever taught me. His power lay in the courage he gave others. He did not ever seem to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him. He used to make us realize that there was nothing secular in life; it was all holy. "Always remember, you are incidentally an American, and a woman, but always a child of God. Tell yourself day and night who you are. Never forget it." That was what he used to tell us.

'It was January, 1895, in New York, when I went with my sister, for the first time, to hear the Swami in his own sitting room, which was crowded. As there was no chair left vacant, I sat on the floor in the front row. Swamiji stood in the corner. He said something, the particular words of which I do not remember, but instantly to me that was truth, and the second sentence he spoke was truth, and the third sentence was truth. And I listened to him for seven years and whatever he uttered was to me truth. From that moment life had a different import. It was as if he made you realize that you were in eternity. It never altered. It never grew. It was like the sun that you never forget once you have seen.' What more can discipleship mean?

I kept looking at her speechless with amazement. Then she said, in a very sweet and affectionate voice, "Now tell me what you want to know about Swamiji.' I asked, 'Please give me a description of Swamiji in one word.'

The noble lady was startled. 'I asked Swamiji the same question about his Guru,' she said. 'I shall tell you the same thing that he told me in reply: "He was not holy, but he was holiness itself! Over and above that, he was the very embodiment of power, of courage. In one word, he was the sum total of everything that is good."'

After some days, I went to Sargachi. I had heard that Swami Akhandananda, who was living there, had been like a younger brother to Swamiji. He was extremely devoted to Swamiji, and Swamiji, in turn, had been very fond of him. Swami Akhandananda told me many stories of the days of his wanderings with Swamiji.

But I was eager to hear from him a real description of Swamiji. One day when some lantern slides were being shown, the Chicago pose of Swamiji appeared on the screen. At once, Swami Akhandananda, an old man of seventy, sat straight up like a young boy of seventeen, and said, 'Do you see? This is the image of Swamiji, the very picture of fearlessness! Swamiji is the visible God of this age. People will understand his words first, and then through him they will understand Sri Ramakrishna. It is difficult to have a vision of Sri Ramakrishna, but one can see Swamiji easily. He is moving around you so that you may catch a glimpse of him.'

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

'A Question-Answer Session at a Franciscan Seminary' by Swami Prabhavananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, U.S.A., is published by the kind courtesy of the *Vedanta and the West*, a bi-monthly journal published by the Society. We are thankful to them for having made available to us a copy of the article in advance.

Prof. M. K. Venkatarama Iyer is a retired Professor of Philosophy of the Annamalai University and has been contributing to the *Vedanta Kesari* for some years now.

Swami Jnaneswarananda's article 'Realization of the Infinite' is from a class talk of his, delivered on June 6, 1935 at the Vedanta Society of Chicago, of which he was the founder-leader till his passing away in 1937.

Prof. K. P. S. Choudhury, M.A.B.L., is Vice-Principal and Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology in A.P.S.M. College, Barauni.

'Raja Yoga — Restated' by Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore, is the third instalment of the series.

DO WE ENCOURAGE SANSKRIT LEARNING?

It is a universally acknowledged fact, except of course in some fanatical circles, that Sanskrit has played a great part in upholding India's religious, cultural and national traditions. India's religious lore, commencing from the Vedas to the philosophical systems which are all written in Sanskrit, has held its own in spite of the vilifications heaped upon it and distortions practised over it by vested interests. Every clear-minded thinker, if he is not prejudiced against it, will acknowledge this fact. Is it not then our duty to give it some place in our national education system? Today we are faced with student unrest and the tendency in them to flout authority. Why? Because we have not laid the foundations of their education on a sound system. There was no proper respect given for the teacher's profession, whereas in olden days the teacher was the moulder of the future generation and was therefore respected and honoured. There it is in the tradition of Sanskrit learning. Private individuals and institutions who have realised this fact have come forward now to work in the cause of Sanskrit and they need every encouragement to carry on their work. However, a report published in the *Hindu* dated August 23, 1965 does not give a bright picture of the situation. We quote 'extracts' here from the report:

Tiruchi. Aug. 22.

The monthly teaching grants to be paid to teachers working in the Oriental High School, Mutharasanallur, have not been paid since April, 1964, it is learnt, though sanctioned as in the case of the other secondary schools by the Government. In this school the pupils are coached for the OSLC public examination (Corresponding to S.S.L.C.) with Sanskrit as the main language.

Because of the grants not being paid promptly, qualified teachers are not coming forward to serve in the institution. The school is being managed by the Sri Bala Gurukulam, which has also been running a similar institution, with Sanskrit as the main language in Lalgudi. For the latter school even formal recognition has not been received so far, though permission for starting it was granted by the Government as early as 1963.

Referring to the Mutharasanallur institution, Mr. G. Kandaswami, Honorary Correspondent of the two institutions, stated that the management had erected a block of six rooms to house the classes at a cost of Rs. 70,000. But the construction work was held up at present, due to non-receipt of the State Government's grant of Rs. 32,000. He was confident that the Sanskrit institutions in Mutharasanallur and Lalgudi would progress if only the grants due were paid to them regularly, as in the case of the ordinary High Schools.

We hope that the authorities concerned will look into the matter and speedily remedy the situation.

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REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE DIVINE VOICE OF SRI SRI THAKUR HARNATH: By A. Ramakrishna Sastri. Published by the Author at 3/19-A, Innespeta, Rajahmundry-2. Pages: 317. Price: Rs. 4/-.

In this companion volume to his earlier work on Thakur Harnath's letters, Sri Ramakrishna Sastri has collected from all available sources the various discussions, messages and conversation of the saint covering a large variety of topics. Many of his observations are of practical import to the spiritual seeker. It is not necessary, he points out, to concentrate upon the image while doing the Nama-Japa; if the Japa is done with feeling, the image comes up spontaneously.

Love is the direct route to God. Even human love can lead to the divine love; the householder's life is an opportunity to cultivate this love and deepen it into the higher love.

There is so much of common-sense in these utterances, and wit too; *vide* his reply to Sri C. R. Das (P. 142).

M. P. PANDIT.

VEDANTA IN TEN VERSES of Sri Sankaracharya. Translated by T. M. P. Mahadevan and N. Veezhinathan. Published by: Sankara Vihar, 25, Trust Square, Madavakkam Tank Road, Madras-12. Pages: 29. Price: Re. 1/-.

Ascribed to Acharya Shankara, this composition of ten verses gives the essence of the Advaita doctrine of Vedanta. Sublate all the fleeting phenomena — changing conditions of Time, Space, Causality, the states of Consciousness — and the non-dual self alone remains. This self is none other than the Absolute, the Brahman. The ten stanzas are a powerful evocation of this Truth of the Advaita Marga. When recited and meditated upon they do create an atmosphere conducive to a realization of their key-note.

Both the translation and the explanatory notes are lucidly done.

M. P. PANDIT.

KULARNAVA TANTRA: Introduction: Arthur Avalon. Readings: M. P. Pandit. Publishers: Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. Pp. 357. Price Rs. 25/-.

This extremely well produced treatise, opens to the English reader, the vast treasure house of the tantric literature appertaining to Kaula marga, which is essentially not far different from the Jnana marga of the Advaitin. The author has done well to embellish his translation with copious quotations from the Upanishads and the Gita and from contemporary savants like Sri Aurbindo.

One is however struck by the fact that many of the ideas had been elaborated by the great Adi Sankaracharya. On page 27, there is a categorical affirmation that the Jnana marga alone leads one to liberation. Chapter VIII, IX and X lay stress on Guru Bhakti. Chapter XI singles out "Japa" and Dhyana, for attaining the four-fold objects of life, and it is asserted (P. 111) that 'all blemishes due to transgressions of rule from the jiva upto the Brahma, done knowingly or unknowingly, are wiped away by japa'.

An appendix giving derivations of many of the important terms in the Tantra Sastra, which throws 'a flood of light on the height of aim and the exactitude in detail of the wide-visioned builders of this system,' is a valuable part of this book.

The publishers deserve all praise for bringing to light such a priceless treasure of ancient Hindu wisdom and one hopes that it will be translated into the principal dialects of this country.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

HINDI

GITA MATA KI GOD ME: By "Sri Seekar". Published by Hindi Bhavan Kalpi. Pages: 127. Price: 80 Paise.

This is an interesting collection of brief studies of modern problems in the light of the teachings of the Gita. Not only philosophical and spiritual questions like the existence of God, Karma, Equality of vision, Knowledge and Works are examined, but also social problems relating to the codes of Hindu religion, institution of marriage, war and non-violence etc. are sought to be solved in line with the tradition coming down from the Vedas. They are mostly in the nature of answers to questions or comments upon letters and are written in a popular style so as to be understood by the average mind.

A useful contribution.

M. P. PANDIT.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

Swami Ramakrishnanandaji's Birthday

The birthday of Swami Ramakrishnanandaji Maharaj was observed at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on Monday, July 26, 1965. The day started with *Mangalarati* in the shrine, bhajan, chanting of the Gita, followed by Chandi Parayana, Puja and Homa. After the Homa (which concluded at 1-30 p.m.) 700 devotees and 300 *daridranarayanas* were served with food *prasad*. In the evening after Arati in the shrine there was reading from the life of Swami Ramakrishnanandaji Maharaj followed by a speech by Swami Abjananda.

The Public Celebration came off on August 1, 1965. The celebrations began at 3-15 p.m. with Harikatha by Brahmasri T. S. Balakrishna Shastrigal on 'Anguliya Pradanam', at the Vivekananda Hall.

The meeting started at 5-30 p.m. with Vedic chanting, and a devotional song. Swami Abjananda welcomed the President of the evening, the lecturers and the gathering. Sri S. Venkateswaran (Retired I.C.S.), President of the meeting spoke on the life and Teachings of Swami Ramakrishnanandaji Maharaj. Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Editor, *Kalaimagal*, then spoke in Tamil, Sri G. Venkataraman, Principal, Vivekananda College, Madras, spoke in English. Sri S. K. Sivaraman proposed a vote of thanks with which the meeting came to an end at 7-30 p.m. The meeting was followed by bhajan (in the Math Hall) led by Swami Priyananda, for about an hour. The celebration came to a close at 9 p.m.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

Sri Krishna Jayanti

Sri Krishna Janmastami was celebrated in Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on Thursday, August 19, 1965 with Puja and Bhajan at night after Arati, which continued upto 11-30 p.m.

The public celebration was held on Sunday, August 22, 1965 at the Vivekananda Hall. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the speaker and the gathering. Dr V. Raghavan, Head of the Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras, the speaker of the evening, spoke in English for nearly an hour on the life and teachings of Sri Krishna. Sri N. Subramanian (Anna), Secretary, Vivekananda College, Madras gave the gist of Dr Raghavan's speech in Tamil and proposed the vote of thanks.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NEW DELHI.

REPORT FOR 1964-65.

The Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi runs a Library and a Reading Room, a University Section, a Free Tuberculosis Clinic, and an Outdoor Dispensary, and a Sarada Mandir (a religious and moral instruction class for the children aged 6-12 years). Besides there is a shrine and a spacious prayer hall and an auditorium.

The Tuberculosis Clinic has 28 beds in the observation ward. It is equipped with X-ray and Ultra-violet apparatus and is also equipped for surgical measures, besides general treatment. The number of outdoor cases treated in the Clinic during the year under report was 1,41,212 of which 2,141 were new. During the same period 259 indoor cases were treated in the observation wards.

The Outdoor Homoeopathic Dispensary which has been rendering service to the people of the locality since 1929, treated 43,925 cases of which 7,909 were new, during the year.

46 Tulsi Ramayana discourses, with a total attendance of 23,565, were held during the year by different Hindi Pundits. Discourses on 35 Sundays were given at the Tutorial Building Hall of the University of Delhi by the Secretary. Besides the Sunday lectures at the Mission, lectures were delivered by him in Delhi at a number of educational institutions. He undertook lecture tours to different parts of India and delivered 25 discourses and talks.

The birthdays of Sri Krishna, Christ, Buddha, Nanak, Sankara, Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated.

Library: The average number of persons daily visiting the reading room was 334. 1,338 books were added during the period, and the number of books in the Library (including the Children's Section) reached 16,681. The reading room received 13 newspapers and 126 periodicals during the period. The number of books issued was 16,773.

The University Students' Section of the Library was used by 80 students on a daily average and the number of books issued was 1,562.

The Sarada Mahila Samiti held classes every Sunday from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. for children and the average attendance was about 50.

The management thanks the donors, friends and others who helped the Centre to render its services to one and all.

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

एकस्वभावं सत्तत्वमाकाशो द्विस्वभावकः। नावकाशः सति व्योम्नि स चैषोऽपि द्वयं स्थितम् ॥६१॥

Sattvaṁ, Reality; *ekasvabhāvaṁ,* is of one nature; *ākāśaḥ,* ether; *dvisvabhāvakaḥ,* of two natures; *sati,* in Reality; *na avakāśaḥ,* there is no space; *vyomni,* in ether; *sa ca,* the nature of Reality; *eso'pi,* this (space) also; *dvayaṁ,* two; *sthitaṁ,* are established.

61. Reality (Brahman) is of one nature (that of existence) whereas ether has two natures. There is no space in Reality, on the other hand in ether are existence as well as space.

यद्वा प्रतिध्वनिर्व्योम्नो गुणो नासौ सतीक्ष्यते। व्योम्नि द्वौ सद्ध्वनी तेन सदेकं द्विगुणं वियत् ॥६२॥

Yadvā, or; *pratidhvaniḥ,* echo; *vyomnaḥ,* of the ether; *guṇaḥ,* quality; *asau,* this; *sati,* in Reality; *na īkṣyaté,* is not seen. *Vyomni,* in ether; *sat dhvanī,* existence and echoing; *dvau,* two; (*staḥ,* are); *tena,* therefore; *sat,* Reality; *ekaṁ,* (of) one (nature); *viyat, ākāśa*; *dviguṇaṁ,* of two natures.

62. It may also be said that echo is the quality of ether but that is not seen in Reality. In ether there are two natures existence and echoing, because of this also, Reality is of one nature and *ākāśa* of two.

या शक्तिः कल्पयेद्व्योम सा सद्व्योम्नोरभिन्नताम्। आपाद्य धर्मधर्मित्वं व्यत्ययेनावकल्पयेत् ॥६३॥

Yā śaktiḥ, what power of Brahman; *vyoma,* ether; *kalpayet,* projected in Reality; *sā,* that (Māyā); *sadvyomnoḥ,* between Reality and ether; *abhinnatāṁ,* non-difference; *āpādya,* bringing forth; *dharma dharmitvaṁ,* as attribute and possessor of attribute; *vyatyayena,* by contrariety; *avakalpayet,* projected.

63. That power (of Brahman) which projected ether in Reality that power (Māyā) bringing forth non-difference between Reality and ether projected them as attribute and possessor of attribute by contrariety.[1]

[1] In the sentence, 'ether exists' existence has become, as it were, an attribute of ether and ether the possessor of that attribute. Though ether came out of Existence

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(Reality) it is by contrariety made to appear to possess existence as its attribute — that is the meaning.

NOTE: How for this contrariety Māyā is responsible is being explained in the next few verses.

सतो व्योमत्वमापन्नं व्योम्नः सत्तां तु लौकिकाः। तार्किकाश्चावगच्छन्ति मायाया उचितं हि तत् ॥६४॥

Sataḥ, to Reality; *vyomatvaṁ,* the form of ether; *āpannaṁ,* was come; *laukikāḥ,* materialists; *tārkikāsca,* and dialecticians; *vyomnaḥ,* to ether; *sattāṁ tu,* existence as an attribute; *avagacchanti,* understand; *tat,* the cause for such understanding; *māyāyāḥ,* to Māyā; *ucitaṁ hi,* is verily attributable.

64. Reality was transmuted into ether, but the materialists and dialecticians understand 'existence' as an attribute of ether whereas really the cause for such mis-'understanding' is attributable to Māyā.[1]

[1] It is Māyā which makes one understand a thing in the topsy turvy way. This is being explained by an example in the next verse.

यद्यथा वर्तते तस्य तथात्त्वं भाति मानतः। अन्यथात्वं भ्रमेणेति न्यायोऽयं सार्वलौकिकः ॥६५॥

Yat, what object; *yathā,* in what form; *vartaté,* exists; *tasya,* its; *tathātvaṁ,* nature of existence; *mānataḥ,* by proofs, such as direct perception etc.; *bhāti,* shines, is revealed; *anyathātvaṁ,* different nature; *bhrameṇa,* due to illusion; (*bhāti*) *iti,* is thus perceived; *ayaṁ,* this; *nyāyaḥ,* logical deduction; *sārvalaukikaḥ,* (is) universal.

65. In whatever form a given object exists, its nature of existence is revealed through proofs such as direct perception and the like. Its being perceived in a different form is due to illusion: this logical deduction is universal.[1]

[1] An example of such perception: perceiving the mother of pearl (*shukti*) as a mother of pearl is proper perception but seeing silver in its place is due to illusion. From such instances in the world it is clear that due to illusion we see things not as they exist but in a different form. So also about this Existence, this Reality, which appears as so many and in such various forms under the illusion of Māyā. What is the way out of this illusion? is being explained next.

एवं श्रुतिविचारात्प्राग्यथा यद्वस्तु भासते। विचारेण विपर्येति ततस्तच्चिन्त्यतां वियत् ॥६६॥

Evaṁ, in this way; *śrutivicārāt-prāk,* before pondering over the meaning of the scriptural texts; *yat,* what; *vastu,* Abiding Substance (i.e. Brahman); *yathā,* in what manner; *bhāsaté,* appears; *vicāreṇa,* through pondering over the scriptural texts; *tat,* that; *viparyeti,* appears in an entirely different form; *tataḥ,* therefore; *tat viyat,* that ether; *cintyatāṁ,* cogitate on.

66. In the manner stated above, before pondering over the meaning of the scriptural passages that Abiding Substance (Brahman) appears in several forms as ether etc., but through cogitation on the meaning of the scriptures it appears in its true nature.[1] Therefore, cogitate on the nature of ether.

[1] By discrimination one comes to know that ether and other things that are in the world are in essence one, that is Brahman — appearing as many because of Māyā.

भिन्ने वियत्सती शब्दभेदात् बुद्धेश्च भेदतः। वाय्वादिष्वनुवृत्तं सन्नतु व्योमेति भेदधीः ॥६७॥

Śabdabhedāt, due to diversity in words; *buddheḥ ca bhedataḥ,* also because of difference in ideas; *viyatsatī,* ether and Existence; *bhinné,* are

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MESSAGE OF THE GITA FOR THE PRESENT DAY WORLD

I

THE one scripture which fulfils the need of every righteous person and under any or every circumstance is possibly the *Bhagavad Gita*. Of course the Vedas and the Upaniṣads are the main source of all Hindu faith and therefore cannot be discounted. But the *Gita* has their essence all brought together in one place. It shows you how to live in the world without being tainted by its colour. It encourages every one to follow his traditional duties, or the avocations in which each man is placed, following which, it says, he will come to the highest.[1] This is the foundation of the *varnāshrama dharma*. It shows how every one was considered a useful member of the great family of humanity. The *Gita* has a message for every class and every section of human society. It never tells anyone to lie low and suffer humiliation. Sri Krishna, the teacher, says time and again to Arjuna, and through him to every one that is facing his battle of life, 'to stand up and fight' for the righteous cause. 'If you fall,' he says, 'you will attain heaven and if you win you shall enjoy the earth; therefore stand up firmly determined to fight.'[2]

It has a message for every man, to be honest, to be self-sacrificing, to acquire divine qualities. Its message to the spiritual aspirant has been dealt with, in various ways, all throughout the Gita; and all along the march of time several commentaries — delineating its message to the various types of aspirants in the different denominations of the Hindu religion — have been written, expounded and enlarged upon. It has a message to the rulers, to be undaunted, to rule righteously and be firm against the foe. This message of fearlessness is there in the Upaniṣads. Though this code is not new to the Gita, in its reiteration the Gita is most explicit, and thoroughly purposeful. There is no mincing of matters, no dallying of words. It respects no persons in giving out what it intends to teach. Krishna severely upbraids his most beloved of friends and relatives, Arjuna, at the meekness and weakness displayed by the latter. He says, 'Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pṛtha, it does not behove you (a man of prowess). Giving up this weakness of the heart stand up.'[3] Here you have a message for the warrior, nay for all. Swami Vivekananda said that this is the message of the *Gita*, not to be weak, not to be cowed down by brute force. It is these and other words that poured forth from the lips of Sri Krishna that slowly roused the wilting heart of Arjuna, as it were by a shower of rain; the gathered clouds of infatuation were scattered and consciousness returned, until at last freed from doubt he was willing and eager to fulfil his part,[4] in the circumstances.

There have been scoffers and there have been sceptics who have belittled or did not believe in the message of the scriptures. It is easy to run down religion, spiritual effort and scriptures, when man is in affluence and peace and happiness prevails. But when a trying time comes and he is pressed on all sides, it

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[1] स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥
Gita, 18. 46.

[2] हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥
Ibid., 2.37.

[3] क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ *Ibid.*, 2. 3.

[4] नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥
Ibid., 18. 73.

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is these words of practical wisdom, of calm collectedness and of vigour and encouragement that support him. *Gita* is such a scripture. It has not yet lived its time. It shall last to eternity. Though it was told thousands of years ago, its message has not become obsolete nor even dull. On the other hand, every time we think about it, every time we are faced with a new problem it has a solution for even that new problem, if only we care to go through it, thus bringing to our attention its vitality and usefulness. It is, therefore, incumbent on every Hindu, for the matter of that on every person, who likes to live a life which can be properly so named, to study and imbibe the proper mode of conduct that is becoming to the position and place he occupies. For a life without a purpose, without manliness, according to the Aryan code of morals, is no life at all.

The world today is poised on the brink of a precipice and it requires enormous courage to face the crisis and decide in what manner the situation can be tackled. Here again the *Gita* comes to our rescue. Sri Krishna, by his own example, sets before us an ideal which shows how a problem, a difficult situation can be countenanced. In the midst of the warring parties, the serene and unruffled picture of Sri Krishna holding the reins of Arjuna's horses brings out in no uncertain terms the idea of how man should live in the world, unattached, like the lotus leaf in water,[5] as he himself says. In a beautiful hymn to Sri Ramakrishna Swami Vivekananda also brings before our mind's eye the majesty and grandeur of this picture of Sri Krishna. He sings : 'He who quelled the noise, terrible like that at the time of destruction, arising from the battle (Kurukshetra), who destroyed the terrible yet natural night of ignorance (of Arjuna) and who roared out the *Gita* sweet and appeasing ; That renowned soul is born now as Sri Ramakrishna.' * Though the *Gita* is sweet and appeasing every word of it dins into our ears the message of courage and strength in a lion's roar. We cannot dare ignore its clarion call to arise and awake.

Further, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna : 'Giving up attachment to the fruits of one's actions, and always contented, without depending on anything, though one is engaged in action, one does not do anything.'[6] In this small verse is contained a meaning that can last and support every man for his whole life time. The one point that Sri Krishna stresses here is that it is cowardice to run away from duty, from a righteous action, a noble cause. Man, as long as he lives, must perform some action or other, he cannot live idly and one day he must die. Swami Vivekananda used to say, 'Die you must, but have a great ideal to die for, and it is better to die with a great ideal in life'. This idea is contained in the above utterance of Sri Krishna. In another place he says, 'To work only have you the right and not to the fruits thereof. Let not the fruits of action be the motive behind your actions ; nor be attached to inaction.'[7] He is the hero who, amidst stresses and strains, can stand up and meet them boldly without caring for what happens to him or for the fruits of his action. But this requires enormous practice and tremendous will power. We have to cultivate it.

'The earth is for the heroes to enjoy,'[8] says a Sanskrit proverb and in every day of

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[5] ब्रह्मण्यादाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥
Ibid., 5. 10.

* स्तब्धीकृत्य प्रलयकलितं वाहवोत्थं महान्तं
हित्वा रात्रिं प्रकृतिसहजामन्धतामिस्रमिश्राम् ।
गीतं शान्तं मधुरमपि सिंहनादं जगर्ज
सोऽयं जातः प्रथितपुरुषो रामकृष्णस्त्विदानीम् ॥

[6] त्यक्त्वा कर्म फलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किंचित्करोति सः ॥
Ibid., 4. 20.

[7] कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥
Ibid., 2. 47.

[8] वीर भोग्या वसुन्धरा ।

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our life we come to experience it. The weak and the infirm are trodden down everywhere. Stand up to your rights, that is the call of the age. That is what the *Gita* also teaches. But it also teaches us not to encroach upon another man's right. Righteousness has been the moral code of the *Gita*, of India throughout its history. Swami Vivekananda says India never went to conquer any country. It never subjected any nation, not that it was weak or infirm to do so, but it recognised man's right to live in his own way in his own country. On the other hand, over and over again India has been trodden over, conquered by various races. But it has risen anew showing the very conquerors that they were not able to crush down its infinite vitality to grow and assert its right persistently afresh. That has been possible because of the faith the Hindus had in their scriptures, of the eternality of the soul, of the necessity of spirituality in a world of mundane thinking, because of its firm conviction that Hinduism, the eternal religion, the Sanatana Dharma will live and also because India has a message, not only to its own people but to the people of the world as a whole — that in the framework of this world India has a prominent role to play as a reviver of higher values. Swami Vivekananda observes that India has more than once contributed its spirituality and its philosophy to the regeneration of the world and it has yet to play its part in the world in this capacity. So it is essential that India keeps its banner of spirituality flying high and to do so keep its culture and individuality as a nation intact and sound.

II

Tradition has it that the *Gita* was taught on the battle field to Arjuna. Some say that it is an allegory referring to the eternal struggle that goes on in man's mind between the righteous aspirations and unrighteous desires. Whatever that may be the *Gita* has a word of solace, a word of encouragement, a word regarding one's duty to everyone of us, wherever we may be placed.

What is the message of the *Gita* for the present day world — a world of science and technology, of ratiocination and logical analysis? Here we have to be clear in our minds. It will not do to shut our eyes to the unseen and unexperienced truth, in the name of these high sounding words. A large part of man's life remains hidden from him, and usually science does not take cognizance of this fact. It is satisfied with phenomenological experience and physical reactions. But man is more. Man is not a mere physical entity, he has a psychological being, a spiritual being within him. This fact has to be conceded and unless this is done we cannot adduce any meaning to life. If man was to live like any other of the animal species why was he specially endowed with the thinking faculty more than other animals? Is it to exploit all other living beings? That does not make any sense. Man has a higher purpose, higher value to cultivate, higher and nobler things to know and to assert in his own life. That is why he has been gifted with that power of discrimination, of thinking. It is possible to use this power either in the constructive or destructive way. Mere morality is not all that is meant by higher values. Morality without a spiritual basis is like a house without foundation. It cannot stand the analysis of reason: Why should we be moral? If spiritual values are not taken into consideration you cannot answer this question satisfactorily. No amount of legislation can make a man good, though he may be superficially well-behaved. There must be some principle which he struggles to achieve. There must be an ideal, a goal to attain; without that man is no man.

It is painful to see that in some quarters a wholly wrong interpretation is put as to what is meant by a secular state. They conceive it as a state consisting of people without religion. They want to believe that religion hurts people. They fear that religion, if taught

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to their children may upset the apple cart of their plans, their designs. In the name of education they want unrestrained freedom to behave as one pleases, as if education means a passport to licence and indulgence. Such may be the practice somewhere, in spite of all effort against it, but if India tries to adopt or imitate such behaviour the country's future would be bleak notwithstanding all the progress it may make in other directions. Restraint and sacrifice are the two essential qualities that the people of a country with a vast population like India must inculcate if it means to maintain morality and harmony in its own land. That is what Swami Vivekananda reiterated when he observed: 'The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself.' Outward renunciation along with inner dispassion may not be possible for all, but everyone can practise inward renunciation, control over the senses, to a smaller or greater extent. And if one cannot practise it that does not give him any right to water down the ideal or condemn it. It is no use trying to accuse religion for all that is unhealthy in society. On the other hand it is the other way about; it is the spiritual force that still sustains society.

There is enough indiscipline in the student world to require any one to plead their cause for more liberality. A disciplined life, where it is not overburdened by unnecessary dogma or harshness, should be a welcome feature in all schools and colleges and not a matter to be decried or ashamed of. If only we will remember that the students of today are to be the torch-bearers of our culture and the future leaders of India it will be obvious, to anyone with a little understanding, as to how much they should be instructed in restraint of the senses and enabled to form a temperament of sacrifice. For the lack of this spirit of sacrifice, in a sufficient measure, and the overwhelmingly predominant desire for personal gains it is that India had to suffer repeated humiliations at the hands of alien hordes in the past and even today suffers from so many maladies. Let us remember this and learn to live a disciplined life and help the younger generation to do so. Example is better than precept. That is what Sri Krishna says to Arjuna, 'In whatever way the great men act in that way the common man acts as well'.[9] He wanted Arjuna to be an exemplar. Otherwise it would not have mattered whether Arjuna fought the battle or relinquished the kingdom and retired to the forest. Sri Krishna would have brought victory to the Pandavas even without Arjuna. But that would have been a bad example for all time. That is why he infused into Arjuna the spirit to discriminate between the right and the wrong and stand steadfast for the just cause whatever might be the outcome.

Mental poise is another quality that the *Gita* recommends and teaches how to acquire. Not to be swayed by joy or sorrow, happiness or misery, not to be deterred by calamity, but face everything that comes one's way with an unperturbed mind, and determination to do the right thing is a virtue that is always an asset, not only in spiritual life but also in all other walks of life. A man works himself into a fever for a wrong done but in his anger he may forget the very noble characteristics for which he is fighting. 'One who is not elated (at gains) nor hates, one who does not grieve (at misery or adversity) nor desires anything and gives up all good or evil and is devoted to God is dear to Him,'[10] says Sri Krishna. As already said these virtues stand one in good stead in every situation. Depending on the Lord, to work as His tool, leaving all results of one's actions in His hands, can be done only by one who is clear in his mind as to the righteousness of the

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[9] यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः । *Gita*, 3. 21.

[10] यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान् स मे प्रियः ॥ *Ibid.*, 12. 17.

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cause. He can then stand up against the whole world, if need be, without even a tremor of the heart. For the world is a strange place where justice and righteousness are bartered away to serve one's needs. As long as it is convenient to have you on one's side it is all right, but the moment you stand up for justice and if it cuts at your friends cloak in however insignificant a manner that friendship goes overboard. But people forget that truth alone triumphs, maybe the injured party has to suffer a great deal, but ultimately truth does triumph, even in secular pursuits.

The *Gita* has been the solace of millions of aspirants; it has also been the strength of many who though not exclusively given over to the spiritual path strive for a good cause. Let us seek its guidance in all our avocations, and be on the right track so that when our day of departure from this world comes, we can leave it without a regret and with the satisfaction of having fulfilled our task.

PANCADASĪ

(*Continued from page* 258)

separate. *Vāyvādiṣu,* in air and other elements; *sat,* existence; *anuvṛttaṁ,* naturally follows. *vyoma tu na,* but not ether; *iti,* thus; *bheda dhīh,* (is) the idea of difference.

67. Due to difference in the words 'ether' and 'existence' and because of the difference in the ideas that are thrown up at the mention of these words, the two are separate. In air and other elements[1] existence naturally follows but not ether thus there is the idea of difference.

[1] In the expressions 'air exists', 'fire exists' the word describing existence always follows but not the word ether, so there is difference between *Sat* and *Viyat.*

NOTE: Next verse proves by reasoning the proposition that *ākāśa* is the attribute of Existence and not existence of *ākāśa.*

सद्वस्त्वधिकवृत्तित्वाद्धर्मि व्योम्नस्तु धर्मता। धिया सतः पृथक्कारे ब्रूहि व्योम किमात्मकम्॥६८॥

Sadvastu, Reality; *adhikavrttitvāt,* being present in all elements; *dharmi,* is the possessor of attribute; *vyomnastu,* but to ether; *dharmatā,* the position of an attribute; (*prāpnoti,* comes). *Dhiya,* through reasoning; *sataḥ,* from existence; (*ākāśa*); *pṛthakkāré,* when separated; *vyoma,* ether; *kimātmakaṁ* of what nature; *brūhi,* tell.

68. Reality (Brahman), being present in all elements and all that is seen, is the possessor of attributes,[1] whereas ether is reduced to the position of an attribute. When from existence ether is separated, through reasoning, tell us what then will be the nature of ether?[2]

[1] As clay forms the support of all forms such as pots, plates etc. made out of it so also Brahman forms the support of all elements including *ākāśa.*

[2] As nothing of the form remains if the clay that goes into the formation of the pots etc. is separated from them, so also *ākāśa* when separated from Existence (Reality) does not remain *ākāśa* any more — it does not exist — that is the meaning. Therefore it is due to illusion that people treat Existence as an attribute of *ākāśa.* But when discriminated in the foregoing manner this confusion clears and one arrives at Reality.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(Continued from the previous issue)

WHILE at Belur Math, Lātu Maharaj used to bow down to the sun morning and evening and that for a long time, which, one day, attracted the notice of one of his co-disciples, who said tauntingly, 'What, O Sadhu, what are you doing?' Lātu Maharaj understood the hidden taunt and said, with great emphasis, 'Why, I am bowing down to this palpably existing manifestation of God, Narayana'. The gurubhai said, 'Which one is your "palpably existing manifestation of God"? I do not feel His presence'. Undaunted, Lātu Maharaj said: 'Why, don't you see the sun, shining before your eyes? How is it you don't feel the presence? Where will you get a more dazzling presence than this? I revere him the most as the Lord most palpably felt.'[1] Since then whenever that *gurubhai* would meet Lātu Maharaj he would ask, 'What news about your "palpably existing god"?'

Once they made a rule that the inmates of the Math must get up at 4 a.m. and having a quick wash sit down to meditate in the shrine. Next day a bell was rung and everyone had to get up. Lātu Maharaj said, 'I did not like the rule. So without telling anybody anything I wanted to quit the Math quietly. The following day as I was going away with my cloth and towel I was observed by Swamiji who asked me where I was going. I said, "to Calcutta". "Why?" Then I said to him, "You have recently returned from the West and are promulgating new rules and regulations. It will not be easy for me to abide by them. I have not reached that degree of control over my mind, that when a bell is rung it will quiet down to meditation. I don't know when it will have the requisite absorption. I have not reached that stage; if you have reached, well and good". Then Swamiji said after a pause, "Very well; then go". But when I had hardly reached the gate he called me back and said, "Well, you need not observe this rule. You may follow your own whims. These rules are not meant for you. They are meant for the neophytes". I said, "Say that".' (The above is taken from Sri Vibhutibhushan Maitra's notes.)

Once, there was a talk of asking a Sadhu of a Calcutta branch of our Math to leave the organization. He heard it and came to Lātu Maharaj and went on speaking against the head of that branch. Lātu Maharaj was annoyed and scolded him, and narrated the following incident to him:

'One day brother Baburam could not get up in time. When it was reported to Swamiji, he asked someone 'Go and ring the bell near his ears'. He did as he was ordered to do. Still brother Baburam did not stir. Then Swamiji himself went and woke him up. At tea time Swamiji told brother Baburam, 'Look here, you are all organizers of the Math. If you do not observe a rule how would others do it? You will have to follow the rules more strictly than others. You must scrupulously observe them; this will encourage others to do the same'. Brother Baburam heard it quietly and said, 'Today I would not get up in time, and this has caused inconvenience to others. I understand it. So brother, do one thing; set a punishment for breaking any rule'. Hearing this Swamiji became grave and said, 'Baburam, could you think of it? I to punish

[1] Reader might remember that Sri Ramakrishna once told Latu Maharaj (who had just returned from *madhukari* and narrated to the Master how a widow blessed him, looking at the sun), that there was relationship between the Sun-god and himself. Apparently Latu Maharaj was surely not bowing down to the orb of the sun.

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you!' Seeing tears in Swamiji's eyes brother Baburam's eyes also glistened with tears. The news reached Rakhal Maharaj. He became anxious and immediately reached the place and intervened: 'Why all this fuss — shedding tears etc.? Do we not have it that anyone who would fail to get up in time will not get his meals that day at the Math, he will have to do *madhukari*?' Brother Baburam was very glad and said: 'Raja is perfectly right. To-day I will beg my food from outside.' Just see the depth of their love for one another. One broke a rule and asked for punishment; another burst into tears at the thought that anyone could think of being punished by another; a third meted out a punishment, and, the breaker of the law was glad to receive the punishment. If such love were not there no Math could be run. Where is that kind of love among you? Does one who breaks a law ask to be punished? Or when so punished does he feel happy at it? Now I see it so common among you — when there is a talk of punishment one leaves the Math in a huff. This is very bad indeed. If you stay at the Math you must observe its rules and regulations. But no, you will be there and you will not follow its routine. This attitude is dangerous. This breaks the organization.'

Hearing the story the person understood his own fault, went back to the person-in-charge of that branch, begged pardon of him, and asked for punishment. Needless to say they were happily reconciled.

Lātu Maharaj once, at Varanasi, said: 'Swamiji wanted to see the new recruits strong and active. So he made a rule that every one should take physical exercise with dumb-bells. I was then at the Math. I went to him and said, "Brother, what is this? We are to take physical exercise at this age? It is impossible for me". Swamiji went on laughing and did not say anything.'

One day Swamiji was dilating, before his co-disciples, on various kinds of worship prevalent in different times in different countries. All on a sudden Lātu Maharaj asked Swamiji: 'Well, brother, you have travelled far and wide and have seen and heard many things. Will you tell me if you have seen people in any country worshipping the earth?'

Swamiji was a little surprised and asked him, 'Why do you ask?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'It is for this reason: Whatever we see around us has come out of the womb of this earth. All our wealth and prosperity, glory and splendour — all have been taken out incising her heart. All that we eat, wear, and enjoy, all that we treasure in our houses and on account of which we think ourselves superior to others, all have come out of her. So I ask, "Do people worship her from whom they get all that they crave for and enjoy"?'

By Swamiji's side was seated Sarat Maharaj. Turning to him Swamiji said, "See how wisely our Plato talks". Then addressing Lātu Maharaj he said, "Brother, no other country except ours worships the earth". To this Lātu Maharaj added, "If that is so how is it that other countries have risen so high and ours, despite worshipping the earth, has remained fallen? What can be the reason?"

Swamiji: 'True, we worship the earth. It is only formal. Where is that love for and feeling of intimacy with her? We offer flowers and basil leaves no doubt, but we cherish no love and reverence for her. They in the West do not perform any formal puja but love her so dearly that they are ever ready to sacrifice their lives for her sake. How many in our country are prepared to do that? This is why they are so high and we are so low, they have gone so far ahead of us.'

Lātu Maharaj kept quiet and Sarat Maharaj put a number of questions on this subject to the Swami.

During the Durga Puja of 1901 Lātu Maharaj was at the Math. That was the first occasion that the Puja was performed in the image there. Formerly it used to be done in a picture or a pitcher. Lātu Maharaj spoke to a devotee later on thus: 'Look here, brother Vivekananda did not have any regard for gods and goddesses. The same brother, before his passing away,

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had the Durga puja performed in the image at the Math. Dou you think performance of worship in the image is useless? Not so. In images also Reality manifests; and man can and does progress spiritually with this aid. It is with this end in view that brother Vivekananda introduced image worship at the Math... Do you know, when this image-worship was introduced at the Math Swamiji invited (Holy) Mother to the Math. She was lodged in the adjacent garden-house. Mother's intervention prevented sacrifice of goats during the puja. Mother used to come everyday during the time of worship, and when it was over she would go back to the garden-house. Sarot's uncle performed the puja that year. The worship, that year, was performed with great *eclat;* and a large number of people took the consecrated food.'

During the Śivaratri of 1902 Lātu Maharaj was at the Math. Lātu Maharaj went to worship Śiva at Kalyaneswar along with this author,* Mokshada Samadhyāyi and Nibaran Datta. There he looked at one of them and said, 'Fasting is weighing you down, I feel; take a little food'.

The devotee said, 'No, I will not take anything before performing the puja'.

Lātu Maharaj: 'This is waywardness. It is not good. The mind should be fixed on Śiva. If fasting takes your mind away from Him, of what avail is it?'

The devotee: 'Why, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'This sort of waywardness, my boy is no good. Rather have the caprice of performing the puja with devotion. Don't place fasting above it. This is perversity and of no benefit. If your mind dwells on food how can you perform worship with love and devotion? If the mind is disturbed you cannot have devotion.'

In this connection there is one more incident. Once Lātu Maharaj went to Nakuleśwartala for worshipping Śiva. There he found one of his fellow passengers was about to faint away due to fasting. Lātu Maharaj said, 'What is this queer idea of religion? Do you think you get merit by setting your teeth on teeth and applying all your will power to keep the body and soul together, and thus being forced to take the mind away from the thought of God? It is not religion. Religion is a matter of joy. If you don't get joy (in thinking of the Lord) fasting is worse than useless. If by fast your body becames inert and your mind dull how will you worship? If you eat too much, physical energy is spent in digesting and naturally the mind becomes dull; so the sages have asked worshippers to take easily digestible food in small quantity on such occasions, so that the mind remains calm and can be applied to worship. But from your behaviour it appears you have misunderstood their injunction. You think that giving trouble to the body and mind is by itself a great act of merit. He (Master) used to say, "Better take a little food and then sit down to worship".'

The same year Swamiji told Lātu Maharaj: 'You will understand much later (long after my passing away) what I have done. This is just the beginning. The peoples of Europe and America are just trying to understand the greatness of our Master and are coming to India by twos or threes. You will see they will come by hundreds. Then will you understand what this demon of a Vivekananda has done.'

Lātu Maharaj heard these words and then quietly said to Swamiji: 'Brother, what novel things have you done? You have simply gone over the track made by previous *acharyas,* e.g. Buddha, Śankara and others. Have you done anything new?'

Hearing this Swamiji said: 'Lātu, my dear Plato, you are perfectly right, eh! I have but followed their footprints, exactly.' Saying this Swamiji looked up and folded his palms and bowed down to the ancient *acharyas.*

One day Swamiji told Baburam Maharaj: 'Baburam, please don't give initiation to any one. That may result in quarrels among the disciples. They would say "My guru is superior" etc. From today I also will not initiate people. It would be the special privilege of our Raja (Rākhāl Maharaj).' Lātu Maharaj

* Sri Chandrasekhar Chattopadhyaya.

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was present on the spot when this conversation took place. May it be that it is for this reason that Lātu Maharaj never made any *chela*?

When Swamiji was touring Kashmir he gave a precious beautiful Kashmiri *shawl* to Lātu Maharaj. Putting it on Lātu Maharaj, one day, went to Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's house on Beadon Street. Looking at the shawl Saratbabu praised it. At once Lātu Maharaj took it off his body and gave it to Saratbabu, saying: 'Would you like to use it, Sarot? Very good, take it. These costly things are not meant for *sādhus*. I used it for only one day since it is a gift of love from Swamiji. It would give me great pleasure if you accept it.' At this Sarotbabu looked small and said: 'Maharaj, excuse me. It is a gift to you by my *guru*, how can I accept it? It does not look well.' Saying this he returned it to Lātu Maharaj. This news reached Swamiji's ears. When Saratbabu came to the Swami a few days after, Swamiji told him: 'You would have done well had you accepted the shawl. You know, Lātu is queer. He would give it away to anyone indiscriminately. Had you taken it from him it would have been well preserved.'

On July 4, 1902 Swamiji passed away. That night Lātu Maharaj was at Balarambabu's house. When he heard the news he at once left the place and instead of coming to the Math went away straight to Haramohan's house on Naran Chand Dutt street at Darjipara. We do not know the reason of this strange behaviour. For we know definitely that he had paid more than one visit to Belur Math to see the ailing Swami. When the news of his passing away became public all the other *gurubhais* in and around Calcutta came to the Math, why he alone did not come remained a mystery. So a few days later a devotee asked him: 'Maharaj, every one went to the Math, you alone were absent. They are talking about it.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Let them talk as they will. Talks cannot aggravate the wound of my heart. How deep was brother Vivekananda's love for me is beyond the comprehension of the critics. I have lost this Elysian love of his. After Master nobody loved me as he did. That brother also has left us.' He spoke these words with so much pathos that the eyes of the listeners filled with tears.

Lātu Maharaj spent the whole winter at Haramohan's house. Between them there were discussions on the ideas and ideals of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

One day in the course of conversation there turned up the topic of how to preach religion. Besides Lātu Maharaj and Haramohanbabu,[2] two other devotees were present — Biharibabu and Girinbabu. The following is taken from the notes of Biharibabu. 'The talk started between Girinbabu and Haramohanbabu. Both were of the opinion that religion should be propagated by lectures, publication of books, pamphlets, etc. When they waxed eloquent on this Lātu Maharaj intervened and said: 'What are you talking Girinbabu? To preach religion by blowing trumpets? Is religion something extraneous to us that one will speak and another will accept? It is a matter of experience, of organic growth; in show and sham, in noise and bustle this experience cannot come to one. Those things make our minds more and more externalized. Unless the whole of the mind is taken inward religion cannot be understood, far less experienced. Just remember. Ten to twenty years back *there* was upsurge of religion in this city of Calcutta. Don't you remember? Preachers of the Salvation Army were found preaching religion on almost every road junction. The Brahmo preachers in their Samaj houses, and the Hindu speakers in their open-air meetings in every quarter of the city were to be seen. Just recall all those meetings — one day Kishub (Kesab) Babu in the Beadon Square, next day Rev. Kali Krishna Banerji, third day

[2] Haramohan Babu was charitably disposed, so much so that even if a dog or a cat would follow him on the street he would purchase something and feed it. And his enthusiasm for preaching the Master's life and teachings was really wonderful. He would compile books and sell them at a cut price, nay he would mostly distribute them free. As a result of all this, the last days of his life were unhappy — he suffered from financial difficulties.

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Krishnananda Swami. People would gather round them and listen. One preacher abused Hinduism, another defended it nicely, extolled it; the people under the leadership of Pundit Śaśadhar started giving scientific explanations of the Hindu rites and customs. The tide of religious preaching rose so high as that. But what is the result of all that? Where are they now? Those who lectured and wrote and published articles — could they augment the number of their followers? Just look at the other side of the picture. There were people who renounced the world for the sake of the Lord, devoted their time in meditation and prayer and bent all their energy towards realization of the Lord. What do you actually see? Do you not see people in multitude gathering round this last group of people? All the other groups melted away, so to say, in the thin air. Did you not find then everybody, man, woman or child, was arguing about religion, rather fiercely? Where have they all gone? Know it for certain that, if there is no substance behind, empty words carry no conviction. There must be renunciation, dispassion, and genuine love for God, then people will believe your words. Lord's wheel moves in this peculiar way. Look at this phenomenon, working before your very eyes. Swamiji — what tremendous austerities did he not perform for years, what burning all-consuming search for the Lord did he not carry on? And when at the end of that he felt Him in and out of himself and got his true commission to preach, people accepted his words. One lecture of Swamiji, only one, drew people to him by hundreds. Before that he was but an unknown wandering monk. And after that lecture the wheel of *dharma* turned. What took place after it was beyond the wildest imagination of the peoples of the world.'

On another day the same topic came up for discussion. That day Haramohanbabu, Dr Nitai Haldar, and devotee Suresh Chandra Datta were present. That day Lātu Maharaj said: 'Much more solid work is done by the study of scriptures than by hearing lectures. For in lectures there is established a temporary connexion between the speaker and the audience, whereas in the study of scriptures the relation between the two is much deeper and abiding. Master used to say, 'To study scriptures is as good as keeping the company of sadhus".' The above is from Sureshbabu's diary.

Much later what Lātu Maharaj opined on the same topic we reproduce here. At Balarambabu's house, addressing a young Sannyasin, Lātu Maharaj said: 'What do I see now? Without knowing the Reality or realizing God yourself you start preaching religion. Who will accept such talks? Can you get a glimpse of religion simply by reading books? Religion is realization. First of all know the Truth yourself then if you get the Lord's command you may preach. Without being commissioned by Him if you preach nobody will hear you. Master told us a story. "Some people used to answer nature's call on the banks of the Haldarpukur. Others tried their best to prevent such abuse but failed. At last they lodged a complaint with the Government. The Magistrate sent a peon with a notice 'Whoever will commit nuisance here will be prosecuted'. That put an end to the whole matter." Moreover, he (Master) used to say, "Preaching! Why, it is a sign of egoism. Man, a puny creature, he to preach about the Infinite Lord! He, the Lord, will preach His glory Himself. What? He who has created the sun, moon and planets, this vast bewildering universe — can He not preach His glory? Is preaching a common affair? When the Lord illumines anyone's heart, with that comes also the power to preach Him. If He enthrones Himself in your heart whatever you will speak will have a compelling force; people will have to accept your words. Know it for certain".'

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THE BHAGAVATA

V. RAGHAVAN

निगमकल्पतरोर्गलितं फलं शुकमुखादमृत द्रवसंयुतम् ।
पिवत भागवतं रसमालयं मुहुरहो रसिका भुवि भावुकाः ।

"O ye men of taste in this world! A fruit has dropped from the celestial wish-fulfilling tree of the Vedas. The parrot (Sage Suka) has had a peck at it, and found it dripping with the juice of immortality. It is the *Bhagavata*! Go on drinking its juice till you become liberated completely."

धर्मः प्रोज्झितकैतवोऽत्र विषयः निर्मत्सराणां सतां
वेद्यं वास्तवमत्रवस्तु शिवदं तापत्रयोन्मूलनम् ।
श्रीमद्भागवते महामुनिकृते किं वा परैरीश्वरः
सद्यो हृद्यवरुध्यतेऽत्र कृतिभिः शुश्रूषुभिः तत्क्षणात् ।

"Unadulterated Dharma is its theme; it is for those good souls free from intolerance; what is to be known here is the supreme Truth, the bestower of supreme welfare which is the end of all misery; the Lord is captured immediately in the hearts of those who listen to this *Bhagavata* composed by the great sage."

ALTHOUGH the latest of the Puranas, the *Bhagavata* became the greatest, and indeed eclipsed all the other Puranas including the Vishnu Purana on which it is mostly modelled. A book of devout reading and exposition, *parayana* and *pravachana*, it ranks with and even contends with the *Ramayana* in popularity and appeal. Like the works of the three great Acharyas, the *Bhagavata*, a product of the South, gained wide sway all over North India where it became the inspiration and the Bible of schools of ecstatic devotion to Krishna, from Maharashtra and Gujarat, across Mathura, to Bengal and Assam. of the Bhakti-margas of Vallabha, Nimbarka, Sankaradeva and Chaitanya. It gave birth to an efflorescence of the music of devotion, in Narasimha Mehta, Mira, Surdas and others and to the birth of a vernacular literature and drama in Assam and a similar literature of Krishna-bhakti in Sanskrit and the local languages — hymn, song, poem, drama and treatises on the doctrines of devotion in Bengal and Orissa. Several commentaries were written on the *Bhagavata* to explain its meaning, including the esoteric, adopting the ideologies of the different schools of thought, not excluding the Advaitic. In fact, the Advaitins, who practised devotion as an accessory to their path of knowledge, contributed perhaps the most important exegesis of the *Bhagavata* — for example the great commentator Sridhara, as also Bopadeva in Maharashtra, the pioneer to analyse, index, and work out a scheme for understanding the unity, plan and purpose of the *Bhagavata*. Bopadeva's *Bhagavata-muktaphala* is an invaluable aid to the study and enjoyment of this Purana.

For the *Bhagavata*, we have a *māhātmya* in 6 chapters given in the Padmapurana, which furnishes us the key to the Purana. *Bhakti* or *devotion* is introduced here as a young wandering lady, accompanied by two old sons, *Jñāna* and *Vairāgya*, *Knowledge* and *Detachment*. She tells Narada that she was born in Tamil country, grown in Karnataka, and in a few places in Maharashtra and became shattered in Gujarat. Unbelievers had attacked her there, but on reaching Brindavana (Mathura), she gained her youth but her two sons con-

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tinued to be in their shrivelled up condition. On behalf of these three, Narada asks of the four eternally young divine sages, Sanatkumara and others the way and they assure him: 'Let the *Bhagavata* be read aloud to them; that great book will revive all the three of them.' Narada submits: 'But the Vedas, the Vedanta and the Gita had already been blown loud at their ears and all that had not been able to rouse them from their prostrate condition.' The four Kumaras explain: 'Well, the *Bhagavata* is born of the essence of the Vedas and Upaniṣads. In a tree, no doubt, the juice is present all over, but cannot be relished; when it gets concentrated into the fruit, it is enjoyed. It is even as butter which has to be churned out of milk and sugar from the cane. Such is the *Bhagavata,* composed by Vyasa, especially for the resuscitation of *Bhakti, Jñāna* and *Vairāgya.*'

In the opening chapters of the *Bhagavata,* we are told of how Vyasa came to compose this Purana *par excellence* of the Lord, as it is called. Vyasa had already codified the Vedas, distilled the Upaniṣads into the Vedanta Sutras, composed the *Mahābhārata* together with the *Gītā,* and several other treatises including all the other Puranas. Yet in his inner heart there was a dejection and an emptiness and when none could give him any consolation and explanation, Narada came and enlightened him. This initial chapter of the *Bhagavata,* forming an exordium, is also an essay in criticism and a comparative estimate of the great sacred books, the Vedas and Vedanta and the *Mahābhārata.* 'The impersonal principles of Dharma and Brahman have been presented in the former; but for attracting and holding the human heart, the emphasis should be on the personality, particularly in the present age; you no doubt shifted to the personality in the epic, but you lost yourself in the fineries of poetry and expression and in the passions and violence of unseemly story and mess of episodes; indeed man missed your message in it; do not hide your mission, let not expression nor interesting story divert your attention or that of the readers; declare your subject, the Lord and the singing of His Name and Glory, as your sole objective and compose a new Purana to this end.' Vyasa obeyed, sang this Purana of Bhagavan, the *Bhagavata,* and found his complete satisfaction.

The *Bhagavata* achieved the above purpose by its own reorientation of the conception of Purana. The Purana is defined by five topics *Panchalakshanas,* comprising primary and secondary creations, the genealogies of gods and sages, periods of time and the dynasties of kings. Through these, it was intended to reinforce the supremacy of the Lord and Dharma. This again, the *Bhagavata* felt was overlaying the essential teaching with too much of other material and in a scheme in which it obviously doubled the topics to ten, *daśalakshanas,* it yet unmistakably declared that the tenth is the highest, viz. the Lord Himself, and that it is to clarify the tenth that the other nine were used (*daśamasya viśuddhyarthaṁ navamaṁ iha lakṣaṇaṁ*). And it also declares in the beginning that this tenth subject, the Lord, is brought out in a most emphatic manner in the tenth of the twelve books of the Purana, by which it means that although the pronounced theme of the Purana is to speak of all the major incarnations and the partial manifestations of the Lord for the redress of the imbalance in the reign of Dharma, the appearance as Krishna is the greatest, the crown and culmination.

The accounts of creation, of deluge, of the different *yugas* and *manvantaras* are all here, but the treatment is such that in every narrative it is the greatness of the Supreme Being that is again and again brought home to us. As part of this endeavour, the *Bhagavata* gives in abundance *Stotras,* hymns to the Lord, strewn all over the work, embodying Upaniṣadic ideas and feelings of devotion. If one should attempt the difficult task of choosing among these, one may mention the hymns of Kunti, Parikshit, Bhishma, Dhruva, Vritra, Prahlada, Gajendra, Brahmā, Vasudeva and Devaki, Akrura and the Veda-stuti. To the

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same end are addressed the several exalted discourses in the *Bhagavata* of which again mention may be made of those of the Lord to Brahma (II), Kapila's to Devahuti (III), the Lord's to King Pṛthu (IV), those in the story of Prachinabarhis (IV), Brahma's to Priyavrata (V), Rishabha's (V), Jadabharata's to King Rahugana (V), to Chitraketu (VI), Prahlada's to his class-mates and his father (VII), Ajagara's (VII), Krishna's to Gopis (X) and above all Krishna's discourses to his friend Uddhava in book XI which form a veritable Gita.

The *Bhagavata's* exhortation is for Bhakti. In fact, what it has said on Bhakti and its forms and phases, on the recital of the Lord's Name, *Namam,* all this has become the basic tenets of the Bhakti-school expounded in many later treatises. The adoration of Krishna, especially as the child, and the love of the Gopis as the prototype of Bhakti at its height, all this again we owe to the *Bhagavata.* But the *Bhagavata* deals with all the three *yogas* of *Jñāna, Karma* and *Bhakti,* and the *Bhakti* that it emphasizes is a synthesis of all the three yogas, as the one naturally involves the other. To love God is to know and realize His true nature, as also to serve Him in all manner possible. Hence it is said in a verse setting forth the theme of the *Bhagavata* that it expounds *Naishkarmya,* cessation from all mundane activity, informed by knowledge, detachment and devotion : *Jñāna, Virāga* and *Bhakti* : *yatra jñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitaṁ naiṣkarmyaṁ āviṣkṛtam.* Kapila who teaches the *Sâmkhya* path of knowledge calls it *Bhakti yoga ;* and explains highest *Bhakti* as the realization of oneself and the Lord in every being around. The *Mukta,* the *Bhakta,* the *Sadhu,* the *Bhagavata,* the *Jnanin* and the *Muni* are all described in different contexts but their characteristics are mostly in identical terms. In his summing up to Uddhava, the Lord says : 'Of the three yogas, those who have desires and projects and programmes in the world should take to *Karma-yoga ;* those who can detach themselves and are given to a stoic nature, may take to *Jñāna-yoga ;* but those who are in the middle, who have desires and yet can think of the Lord, let them cultivate the path of devotion to Me, surrender unto Me themselves and the fruits of their acts, and do their appointed duties as an adoration and offering to Me.'

From what was said at the beginning, it should not be supposed that the *Bhagavata* has no appeal of language. It no doubt rides rough-shod over classical grammar and lexicon but only as a master of both ; this it does consciously, to elevate its diction to the Vedic plane. It can pour forth exquisite poetry as in the description of the seasons and of moonlight and the Rasa-lila in Book X. By its compounds it imparts a vigour and rhythm to its *Anushtubhs* and *Upajatis* which make it a delight to read them aloud and get them by heart.

In putting across ideas, in denunciation of the small things of material life, the *Bhagavata* does not mince matters, it speaks forthright and as the Tamil saying goes, drives in its ideas like nails into green wood. It rises to heights sometimes and expresses its ideas in an astounding manner, with an intellectual and modern ring. 'He who wants more for himself and accumulates is a thief, he is to be punished', it declares in one place. 'Let us have adversities more often, so that we may remember the Lord more incessantly,' prays Kunti. 'The Lord is in the form of Dharma which is a means to self-purification.' The Lord says through Kapila : 'I am not pleased with all the pomp of worship if one insults the living beings in whom I am immanent.' 'Leave off pride and shame and prostrate before all creatures, upto the dog and the ass,' says Krishna to Uddhava. Prahlada says out of compassion for the suffering beings : 'There are sages retired in forests striving for their own lonely salvation ; but I do not want to leave behind these wretched folk in suffering and seek salvation, for myself alone.' King Rantideva prays : 'I do not aspire for divine

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status or miraculous powers; no, not even salvation; I want to enter into fellow beings in suffering and see that they are rid of their misery.' In another place, Manu defines the Lord 'as the exemplar of Man, one who works but is selfless; being full, wishes for nothing; acts without being urged by anybody; and teaches, by himself following the proper path and thus promulgates all *dharmas*'. Lastly, listen to the universal prayer in the *Bhagavata's* own characteristic language: 'May there be welfare for the world; may the wicked become tranquil; may beings contemplate each other's good; may the mind take to the good; and our thought become naturally possessed of the Lord.'

EPISTOLARY FLAMES FROM THE VIVEKANANDA FIRE

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

THE deeper layers of a great man's inner being are generally a closed book to the vast majority of mankind. It is not easy for all to get a close peep into the mystery of a mighty soul's under currents. The great heroes of thought are mostly silent in respect of their innermost experiences. The flames and eruptions emanating from their volcanic interior are but occasional throw-outs of the perpetually seething cauldron of their incandescent spirit. Their fiery words and thundering utterances are but a few waves and tidal upsurges rolling on the surface of their unfathomed Neptune. The seen and heard part of their personality is but the above-water projection of a huge iceberg with six-sevenths of its bulk remaining concealed in the bosom of the water. It is not surprising therefore that the common run of mankind cannot appreciate true worth at its whole value; great men generally go thoroughly un-understood, grievously misunderstood or tragically part-understood. They never try to boost themselves up; rather they suppress as far as they can every external manifestation of their uniqueness, and take their place among the commonplace crowds. For every flowering branch of theirs becoming visible to mortal eye, there are hundreds of buried roots which lie unsuspected in the bowels of the hidden earth of their soul. A diamond, as in Sri Ramakrishna's parable, is appraised at its true price only by a jeweller. The poor brinjal seller with his sense of values coloured by brinjal economics equates the diamond with at best a few kilograms of brinjal. Pearls are things of no worth to the swine, though they are prized possessions of princesses. Even in cases where a great soul's sublimity is revealed to us by an admirer or a devotee, very often the revelation is coloured by that person's pet notions and poor powers of understanding, even as the sun's brilliance is presented to us dimmed by the dark density of the clouds which intervene between us and that orb of light. In an appreciatory letter written in 1897 to Master Mahashay, the celebrated author of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* Swami Vivekananda says, 'The Socratic dialogues are Plato all over, you are entirely hidden'. But a Master Mahasaya is the exception, not the rule. And therefore for a total and intense understanding of the glory of supermen, biographies and critical estimates, reviews and commentaries, collections of teachings and garlands of sayings, annotated editions of works and albums of press tributes and platform laudations are no doubt useful in a way, but in a way only; they distort far more than they brighten. Autobiographic references are much more dependable. Such references are in many cases not available, and if available never in plenty.

To comprehend a Titan like Vivekananda is therefore not an easy task. Only Ramakrishna understood him in all his glory; in fact

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Ramakrishna understood Vivekananda much more than Vivekananda understood himself. Others have understood Vivekananda each in his own light, like the persons who, in Sri Ramakrishna's parable, went to the tree on which the chameleon dwelt and saw it green or red or yellow, unlike the man who always dwelt under the tree and saw the creature in all its colours and in its colourlessness. And they are satisfied with calling him a philosopher or a patriot or a social reformer or a platform orator. He is no doubt every one of these things but he is vastly more. The pot containing sea-water no doubt contains sea-water, but it should not fancy it contains all the sea. Comprehensions and appreciations of Vivekananda by others are all so many peeps from different angles and varying levels into 'Vivekananda's Himalayan being', but a hundred photographs of the Tajmahal though all of them may be realistic and highly indicative of its charm, do not constitute the Tajmahal. The Tajmahal alone knows its own story of love and glorious remembrance, and it alone can tell its tale, and reveal its soul.

It is in this context that the published letters of Swami Vivekananda assume a mighty significance. Other literary efforts of Vivekananda — his lectures, stories, conversations, reviews, dialogues, and talks are more or less formal and objective, if we may say so, though of course no expression can be without its corresponding impression. The letters are of a different sort. In them comes out Vivekananda's very soul. For these letters were written for the most part in the depths of solitude, in moments of deep self-communication. They were written with no idea of publication. They were sacred and intimate outpourings to souls eager to drink deep of the Swami's fountain. They were penned in confidence, in melting compassion, in righteous ire, in high disdain of pettiness, in lofty flights of imagination, in pious longings for the Infinite, in soulful exchanges of deeply cherished ideas, in tense revelations of convictions and beliefs too sacred for the profane ear and the public platform, in rapturous ascents to Ultimate Reality. in self-reverence and self-knowledge, in high inspiration and spiritual fervour. In a letter written from Chicago in 1893 Swami Vivekananda says, 'Whatver I do, I try my best to avoid publicity'. He is therefore covered gold, but his letters uncover him to us at his unguarded moments, and give us glorious glimpses, of that (in Sister Christine's words) 'Wanderer from another Sphere who brought with him to this sorrowful world some of the glory, the power, the radiance of the distant region from which he came, that Swami Vivekananda with whom there could be no comparison, (for he was in a class by himself), who belonged to another order and was not of this world'.

Here below are extracted a few of the more striking of the many significant epistolary outpourings of the many-sided Swami, whose every letter went out like a shaft of light from his quiver of supernal wisdom and like a *Rama-astra* never hurt, but ever healed, and rendered whole the blessed recipient of its saving message.

If Āñjaneya cannot be thought of without Ramachandra, Viveknanda cannot be thought of without Ramakrishna. The central role of Āñjaneya was that of a *Rama-dūta* (messenger of Rama) and the central role of Vivekananda was that of a Ramakrishna-dūta. He was indeed Ramakrishna's heir and beneficiary, messenger and executor, interpreter and working partner, apostle and missionary. In him was nothing that was not Ramakrishna. His utter effacement of self in the Master was on a par with his supreme understanding of the Master. His Ramakrishna-bhakti was extraordinarily sublime and full. Here are his soul's deepest asseverations in regard to this chord of his being :

> I have been vouchsafed the ideal Shastra; I have seen the ideal man.
>
> Ramakrishna has no peer; nowhere else in this world exists that unprecedented perfection, that wonderful kindness for all that does not stop to justify itself, that intense sympathy for man in bondage.
>
> No character was ever so perfect as Ramakrishna.
>
> Without studying Ramakrishna Paramahamsa first, one can never understand the real import of

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the Vedas, the Vedanta, of the *Bhagavata* and the other Puranas. His life is a searchlight of infinite powers thrown upon the whole mass of Indian religious thought. He was the living commentary to the Vedas and to their aim. He lived in one life the whole cycle of the national religious existence of India.

Whatever the Vedas, the Vedanta and all other Incarnations have done in the past, Sri Ramakrishna lived to practise in the course of a single life.

One cannot understand the Vedas, the Vedanta, the Incarnations and such like things without understanding his life. For, he was the explanation.

From the very date that he was born, has sprung the Satya-yuga (Golden Age).

Whoever — man or woman — will worship Sri Ramakrishna, be he or she ever so low, will be then and there converted into the very highest. He was the Saviour of women, Saviour of the masses, Saviour of all, high and low.

In point of character Paramahamsa Deva beats all previous record, and as regards teaching, he was more liberal, more original and more progressive than all his predecessors.

How the world-moving Swami regarded himself in relation to Sri Ramakrishna is well brought out in these utterances of his :

I am Ramakrishna's slave, having laid my body at his feet with til and tulasi leaves. I am obliged to trust his words as the words of one identified with Truth.

Vivekananda no doubt moved with and among mortal men, and seemed to share the joys and sorrows of earth, but in reality he was not of this earth. He was as it were, a visitor to earth from the blessed regions. To what heights of soul frenzy he could attain is brought out in these affirmations of his, revealing the deepest pulsations of his sublime heart :

I bless the day, I was born. I have had so much of kindness and love here, and that love Infinite that brought me into being has guarded every one of my actions good or bad (don't be frightened), for what am I, what was I ever, but a tool in His hands ? For whose service I have given up everything, my beloved one, my joy, my life. He is my playful darling, I am His play fellow. There is neither rhyme nor reason in the universe, what reason binds Him ? He the playful one is playing these tears and laughters over all parts of the play ! Great fun, great fun. It is a funny world, and the funniest chap you ever met is He — the Beloved-Infinite ! Fun, is it not ? Brotherhood or playmatehood — a school of romping children let out to play in this playground of the world ! Isn't it ? Whom to praise whom to blame, it is all His play : They want explanations, but how can you explain Him ? He is brainless, nor has He any reason. He is fooling us with little brains and reason, but this time He won't find me napping.

Vivekananda's deep affection for his brother-disciples was a natural offshoot of his veneration for his Guru.

So long as you have faith in your Guru, nothing will be able to obstruct your way. The sons of my Master are indeed the great objects of my service and here alone I feel I have some duty left for me. Well you may smile to see me weaving all this web of Maya and that is no doubt the fact. But then there is the chain of iron and there is the chain of gold. Much good comes of the latter, and it drops off by itself when all the good is reaped.

To Vivekananda all work was adoration. To him there were no two categories — the secular and the spiritual. His instruction to his Madras admirer and follower, Alasinga Perumal, brings this out.

Entire devotion to the cause, knowing that your *salvation* depends upon making the *Brahmavadin* journal a success is what is necessary. Let this paper be your Ishtadevata, and then you will see how success comes. Perfect purity and disinterested obedience to the Guru are the secret of all success.

The utter clarity of Vivekananda's spiritual perception and the universal sweep of his feelings and convictions are revealed in what he says in a letter to an English friend :

Let talkers talk ! They know no better ! Let them have their fill of name and fame and money and woman. Let us not pay the least attention to what others say, and if after a life time's effort one, only one, soul can break the fetters of the world and be free, we have done our work. Hari Om. Doubtless I do love India. But every day my sight grows clearer. What is India, or England, or America to us ? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called Man. He who pours water at the root does he

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not water the whole tree? There is but one basis of well-being, social, political or spiritual, to know that I and my brother are one.

The magnitude, all-roundedness, and thoroughness of the Swami's mission cannot be stated better than in his own words:

I have clear light now, free of all hocus-pocus. I want to give them (the people) dry, hard reason, softened in the sweetest syrup of love and made spicy with intense work, and cooked in the kitchen of yoga, so that even a baby can easily digest it. To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate Mythology and queer startling psychology, a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds — is a task only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living — poetic — in everyday life; out of the hopelessly intricate Mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogi-ism must come the most scientific and practical Psychology — and all this must be put in a form so that, a child may grasp it. That is my life's work.

How generous and unerring Vivekananda was in his appreciation of true worth is well brought out by the tributes which he paid to men of rare spiritual calibre.

I mail you a book named 'Imitation of Christ' written by a Christian Sannyasin. It is a wonderful book. One is astonished to find such renunciation, Vairagya and Dasyabhakti having existed even among the Christians. Probably you may have read this book before; if not, it will give me the greatest pleasure if you kindly read it.

Day before yesterday, I had a fine visit with Prof. Max Muller. He is a saintly man. I wish I had half his love for India and the Vedanta. His reverence for Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is extreme. Ramakrishna has charmed him for years. He is a saint — a Vedantist through and through.

Lord Buddha is my Ishtam — my God. He preached no theory about Godhead — he was himself God. I fully believe it.

What a great man says of himself in rare moments of self-revelation gives us a truer picture of him than long treatises on him by others. Here are a few remarks of Vivekananda on his own traits and characteristics:

My natural tendency is to go into a cave, and be quiet, but a fate behind pushes me forward and I go.

I feel very very strong now. You ought to see me, Doctor, when I sit meditating in front of the beautiful snow-peaks and repeat from the Upanisads — न तस्य रोगो न जरा न मृत्युः प्राप्तस्य हि योगाग्निमयं शरीरम् ।

— He has neither disease, nor decay, nor death, for, verily, he has obtained a body full of the fire of Yoga.

As for myself I am quite content. I have no bonds here below. I look back and scarcely find any action I have done for self — even my wicked deeds were not for self. I have seen the truth.

My time is short. I have got to unburst whatever I have to say, without caring if it smarts some or irritates others. Therefore, do not be frightened at whatever drops from my lips, for the power behind me is not Vivekananda, but He the Lord, and He knows best.

My ideal indeed can be put into a few words and that is: to preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life.

And here is an assortment of utterances which are arresting both for their content and their expression:

Alas for the irony of our fate, that in this land of Bhagavan Shuka's birth renunciation is looked down upon as madness and sin!

I believe that the Satya-yuga will come when there will be one caste, one Veda and peace and harmony. This idea of Satya-yuga is what would revivify India. Believe it.

You have read मातृदेवो भव, पितृदेवो भव — Look upon your mother as God, look upon your father as God — but I say, दरिद्रदेवो भव मूर्खदेवो भव — The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted — let these be your God.

Him I call a Mahatman whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a Duratman.

God and truth are the only politics in the world, everything else is trash.

The gifts of Swami Vivekananda to posterity are many and varied, but the most charming of them all is the enduring image of his own soulful personality which has been bequeathed to us through the words which issued from his tongue of holy fire and his pen

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of massive vigour. And among these many glowing words of the astoundingly versatile Swami, it is the words of his letters that give us the closest snaps, the most realistic sketches, the most intimate pictures, and the most colourful drawings of one who was truly, what his early name Narendra Nath signifies, a Sovereign Soul which remained encased for a while in a bewitchingly human frame for the lasting welfare of the human race.

THE DYNAMIC POWER OF VEDANTA

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THE most powerful dynamo of strength and power, the infinite and inexhaustible source of eternal perfection, beauty and truth, is man. The sun, the moon, the planets, the oceans and mountains, fire, ether, electricity — all these are but by-products of this great Power which is man. A Vedantist, for that reason, worships man above any other power, any god, demi-god or spirit. He recognizes in man the immense possibility of the highest type of power and perfection. All his endeavour is concentrated on the awakenment and manifestation of the *real* man within. It is not the apparent man, the outer surface, which he considers to be the reality. He goes beyond these appearances and tries to find out that essence which sustains phenomena, and realizing that underlying Principle he finds the Divinity of man.

Above all other expressions of nature man has greater possibility of manifesting that Divinity. Vedanta certainly recognizes the presence of the Divine everywhere. It does not say that the cosmic spark is present only in man, that it is not in beasts, birds, trees and stones. Vedanta declares that from the highest down to the lowest the same one Reality is present everywhere, equally, without any distinction. The reason a Vedantist worships man above all other manifestations is that in him Divinity finds greater expression than in other entities. Vedanta asserts that after going through millions of births and deaths, deriving experience from all kinds of existences, high and low, a soul at last incarnates as man, and in human life alone it can attain the highest perfection and illumination.

But, as in the case of all kinds of power, Divinity may remain in a static or a dynamic form. When power struggles, manifesting strength and vigour at every step of its progress, we call it dynamic ; when it remains in a static form we hardly recognize its presence, as it does not express itself, as it is sleeping. When, in the case of this immensely powerful dynamo of man, that infinite storehouse of power remains in a static condition and does not manifest, we call it the degraded, degenerated or sleeping condition of man. By a skilful method static power can be transformed into dynamic power and the dormant Divinity in man can be aroused and manifested. That makes the difference between a saint and a sinner. According to the philosophy of Vedanta the same perfection is present in the murderer and in the sage, only in a sinner, so-called, the power is obstructed and does not manifest itself. If a lamp is covered with something opaque and dark we will not see any expression of light. But for that reason are we to infer that the light is not there ? The light with all its power and effulgence is there but some external influence is thwarting its expression. In order to see the light we do not have to do anything with the lamp. All that we have to do is to remove that dark, opaque shade. The power of Divinity is certainly present in all, the weak, the depraved and the degraded people of the world. But in order to manifest it they must

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remove the dark coverings. The endeavour of Vedanta is to aid man remove the obstructions that hide the effulgence of the glorious Atman, the soul, within. Again, Vedanta does not propose to give you something which you did not already possess. It helps to remove the obstructions to the manifestation of that perfection which is hidden within you. It is always within you but it is hidden. The method is called Yoga, and there are several forms to suit the taste, temperament and aptitude of different individuals.

To be able to apply the power of this dynamo of the Spirit constructively we have to have a highly developed sense of discrimination. If a huge dynamo of mechanical power is entrusted to one who has no sense of right or wrong or the slightest power of discrimination, he can turn that power to a destructive end ; whereas, if a person of discrimination controls and manipulates it he can accomplish something of greatest good. With the power of the Spirit, also, different ends can be achieved. The power can be applied even in a destructive way. Spiritual power is applied by many for the attainment of worldly ends. And what is the result? Like all destructive forces it not only destroys in the outside world but it eventually devours the mover of the force. So the most important thing is to know how to apply this gigantic dynamo of power.

In order to illustrate this truth a beautiful story is told in the Upanishads. The king of the Devas, Indra, and the king of the demons, Virochana, wanted to find out the eternal and infinite source of power, by possessing which they would be able to accomplish anything they desired. With that end in view they approached Prajapati, the Creator. Making no distinction between them Prajapati taught both the very same truth : "Thou art the infinite source of all power and strength. Know thyself, and the entire power will be at thy command." Both the students retired and contemplated upon this truth, given to them by Prajapati. The demon king, Virochana, saw nothing beyond his physical self. He recognized only his body and mind, and meditating on physical matter he attained what we call material power. He developed gigantic strength in his body, enormous resources, unconquerable military force and, in short, everything that contributes to the power of enjoying the world. He was greatly satisfied by attaining all this and he taught this materialistic philosophy to his people. His kinsmen and descendants are the 'demons,' who see nothing beyond the physical body and material power.

The other student, Indra, contemplated deeply, and sat for meditation over and over again. At first the idea came to his mind that perhaps Prajapati meant the body and mind as the source of all power, but he was not satisfied. He argued within himself : 'This body will perish. It was born, it had a beginning, and for that reason it must have an end. Its life may be prolonged but one day it certainly will end. So the infinite and inexhaustible source of power cannot lie in anything physical.' He argued the same way about the mind. It was changeable, did not exist in deep sleep, and so on and so forth. He went back to the teacher and asked him, 'Master, did you mean that my body and mind were the source of all perfection?' The teacher smiled and said : 'Thou art the source of all perfection. Know thyself and immense power will be thine.' Indra went back again to his meditation. He went deeper and deeper until he unfolded the inner spirit. Realizing That, he found that it was never born and it would never die. The Ātman was infinitely glorious, eternally existing, the source of all power and perfection. He found Brahman everywhere, in everything from the highest down to the lowest. He perceived himself in everything, and realizing his larger Self in every atom he remained immersed in infinite bliss. That is why he is called a Deva. This story is a beautiful illustration of how one can misuse power and wrongly interpret any teaching.

Vedanta sounds a note of warning to man not to become attached to things that are peri-

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shable. 'Do not trust appearances,' it says. 'Remove the veil of Maya and behind appearances discover the Reality.' Vedanta does not teach you to hate this world; it only asks you to find out the Reality of it. Do not get attached to a thing unless and until you know what it is. If appearance attracts you, stop and analyse it and see what is influencing you. Is it only the surface which is fascinating you? Or do you know what it really is? If you analyse every phenomenon that is presented before you, you will find that, instead of being wrongly influenced, you will go deeper and deeper into the reality until every manifestation will reveal to you the light of truth, the depth of wisdom, and the vastness of absolute peace. Therefore the culture of discrimination, analysis, and contemplation have been emphasized over and over again by the philosophy of Vedanta.

The trouble is that although this great power is present everywhere, although we are higher than gods, although we can do anything we like, there is a great force pressing us down. Being gods we move about in this world like so many insects. Why? What is that negative power that has converted us, gods, into so many little earthworms? Vedanta has arrived at the definite conclusion that it is, fundamentally, ignorance, manifesting itself in the form of fear. Fear is the first-born of ignorance, through the influence of which we gods have been dethroned from our kingdom of heaven. Analyse how this one demon, fear, has invaded every department of life, cramping all endeavours, spoiling and devastating the beauty and the magnificence of the wonderful edifice of human life. Study the history of religion, for instance. You will find that almost all the religious systems of the world have originated from fear. Fear has been magnified, eulogised and deified by the church and priesthood of every religion. Whenever I come across the common expression, 'a God-fearing man,' I resent it. As if one who fears God is a very wonderful man!

Vedanta is the only philosophy that declares at the top of its voice that if there is even a small particle of fear existing anywhere within your system you are in the realm of darkness, and so long as ignorance remains light cannot reveal itself. Light and darkness cannot exist at the same place at the same time. Know that you are the only Reality that exists and all fear will vanish. We are overpowered by fear. We are afraid of suffering, we are afraid of death, afraid of losing money, social position, prestige or a little ease or comfort, and that is why destructive forces get the better of us. Try to analyse the mentality of a little child who has the habit of lying. Why does he start to lie? You will find that someone has put the poison of fear into his system, and it is expressing itself in the form of that disease of lying. Analyse every bit of weakness, depravity or sin from which humanity is suffering, and without a single exception you will find that fear is at the back of every evil.

If Vedanta recognizes anything as sin it declares fear to be the deadliest of all. It says: 'Wake up ye gods and dispel the darkness of fear. Assert your own God-given right. Know the truth, and the light of knowledge will reveal everything that is, was, or will be.' It is only fear that holds us confined to vain appearances. Suppose you are told that you are *Brahman*, that you have the possibility of all perfection within you, why does that truth not reveal itself through you instantly? No doubt, it is, because of that destructive force of fear. We are afraid to express ourselves. We are afraid openly to embrace the truth and live it. That is why, being told over and over again, we still do not derive any benefit from the wisdom presented so emphatically by this philosophy of Vedanta.

I had the privilege of sitting at the feet of a great Swami, Swami Turiyananda, (a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna) whose very presence radiated strength and fearlessness. My memory goes back to that gigantic lion of spiritual strength and courage. His voice still rings in my ears as he encouraged us by repeating from the Upanishads.

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'Abhih! Abhih! Have no fear,' he would exclaim. 'It is only fear that is holding you down. Dispel fear, and you will find that you can accomplish anything in this world.' Once he wanted me to go to a place to do some difficult work. I went to him and told him that I had never done any work like that and did not think I would be able to carry it out. My fear displeased him. 'What!' he said. 'You come to me and say you cannot do it! What good has your philosophy done you if even now you are under the delusion that you are weak? What hallucination! Go ahead. Try to do it. You may not be able at first to overpower all the destructive forces, but persist and you will get over the weakness of fear. Then everything you do will manifest great power, strength and vitality.' To make a long story short, let me tell you that I was aroused to a higher consciousness of strength and power, and certainly the very memory of the work I did under his instruction and encouragement gives me a thrill. It uplifted me for the rest of my life.

I would like to tell you a few instances of how he lived that principle of fearlessness in his own life. At one time he was living in a dilapidated old place, forsaken by people as being a haunted house. But there were many students who came to him there for instruction. Once they were having a beautiful discussion about the indestructibility of the soul and other higher truths of Vedanta. In the midst of the discussion an earthquake shook the house. Plaster and bricks were falling all around. Horrified, everyone jumped up and rushed out of the house, through doors and windows. The teacher, led by some instinct, also rose to run away. But as soon as he stood up there rang a distinct voice in his ears, 'Abhih! Abhih! Have no fear! Have no fear!' He told me that the voice sounded so sarcastic, as if it was pointing out to him: 'Have you not just now been discussing the indestructibility of the soul? Then how is it that as soon as the house begins to shake you at once go down to the consciousness that you are the body? If an earthquake could demolish anything it would only destroy the physical body. It could not even touch your inner, real Self.' That at once put him into a state of contemplation, and he sat down and remained absorbed in it. When the earthquake was over, the fugitives began to wonder where the teacher was. They saw the ruins and could not recollect if he had escaped from the house. Hurriedly they started to remove the debris and they found him where they had left him, without even a single bruise. He was absorbed in Samadhi.

On another occasion he faced a tiger. He was in the Himalayas, in one of those forest retreats, practising meditation and contemplation. One beautiful moonlit night he was sitting on a big boulder on the bank of the river Ganges. He was absorbed in the contemplation of that one fundamental Principle, without beginning, changeless, and free from destruction. Suddenly a huge tiger appeared before him. He felt frightened and his first thought was to run away. Sometimes, you know, old instincts get the better of us. In his case also, the Swami told us that his instinct was to flee to safety, but at once something held him down. 'Run away from whom? Is not the very same *Brahman* present in that tiger?' came the voice of truth from within himself. 'It is duality that always creates fear and enmity.' The Swami said that he sat down again and became absorbed in the thought of the oneness of all things. Suddenly, as if by a miracle, the man-eating tiger was frightened by some noise and it ran away and never appeared again

In later life this great man suffered from diabetes. At that time there were no effective medicines for this disease and the Swami developed huge carbuncles on his back. These had to be operated upon. But, in every instance, he refused anaesthetic. He withdrew his mind from the body and allowed the surgeon to operate upon these painful boils, much to the amazement of the doctors. They probably thought he was just immune to pain, for one day the doctor who was attend-

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ing on him decided to cut some more flesh around the wound. Without saying anything to the Swami he cut through with his scissors. The Swami let out a cry of pain. When the doctor enquired about it the Swami said, 'When I know you are going to operate I withdraw my mind from the body, and then I feel no pain. But this time I was not prepared.' He had perfect control over his mind, whenever he wanted to exert that. Such strength I have never seen or heard of before.

On many occasions I have seen how this great man was above all fear. Those who saw him pass out of his body are convinced that never in their lives will they find a second similar instance of fearlessness. He stared death right in the face. He challenged all the forces of destruction, saying in so many words, 'Death, you can take away my physical body, but over my spirit, the Atman—my real Self—you have no power.' Almost the last words that came out of his mortal lips were, 'Abhih! Abhih! Have no fear! Strength is God, Strength is *Brahman*!' He proclaimed that God is present everywhere, in the high and in the low, in phenomena as well as outside of it. 'Everything is *Brahman*, everything is real,' he said. 'The world is real, the world is *Brahman*!' When his attendants saw him trying to raise himself up they gently asked him to lie down, but he said, 'What! I must sit up. I want to sit in the posture of meditation.' He meant that he wanted to pass out of the body in the state of *Samadhi*. This he did. So established was he in discrimination that he could feel the vital energy leaving his body. He observed it as an unattached witness. He watched the death of his body. He was completely detached from it. He saluted his beloved Guru, Sri Ramakrishna, and with a smile of God-realisation illuminating his face he entered into the state of Absolute bliss.

In my estimation there could not be any greater expression of power than I have seen in this great man — power that does not consider any catastrophe, any danger or difficulty as worth anything; power that always remains in touch with that infinite source of purity, beauty and perfection; power that sustains a condition of happiness and effulgence; power that projects peace and bliss, and which cannot be subdued or surpassed by any force that we know of in our experience of the world. I have seen many demonstrations of uncommon physical strength. I have witnessed marvellous feats of mechanical power. I admire them, but compared with the power of the Spirit they are only 'drops in the bucket'.

It is my conclusion that these powers that we call physical or mechanical are only indirect manifestations of the one spiritual power. Power is one, but it can be expressed differently and it can be applied for various purposes. One who sees in a huge engine the power of the Spirit knows the truth. It is not the mass of steel, gas, or fire, or even the sum-total of materials that makes the engine or power-plant so tremendous. It is the power of the Spirit behind, it is the power of man at its back, that makes it mighty. Analyse any manifestation of mechanical or physical power and you will find that directly or indirectly it is the manifestation of the power of man. When that power is focussed on man himself, when its force is applied within man instead of outside, man's real nature is revealed to him. He realizes his own Self as the one source of all power, manifest and non-manifest. He becomes free for ever. He attains the kingdom of Infinite existence, knowledge and bliss.

Love shall win the victory. Do you love your fellow-men? Where should you go to seek for God — are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, gods? Why not worship them first? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganges? Believe in the omnipotent power of love. Who cares for these tinsel puffs of name? Have you love? — You are omnipotent. Are you perfectly unselfish? If so, you are irresistible. It is character that pays everywhere.

— Swami Vivekananda.

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THE GLORY OF THE FEET OF THE LORD

T. R. RAJAGOPALA AIYAR

SOUTH INDIA holds in special reverence four saints as Samayakuravar or the teachers of the Śaivite Sect — Sambandar, Appar, Sundarar and Manickavachakar. Appar is called Tirunavukkarasu, the king or master of divine song, a name conferred on him by Lord Śiva Himself. Saint Appar was born of Śaivite parents but his quest after religious truth led him to become a convert to Jainism which was in its heyday in the south then. His sister Tilakavathiar, who was very much attached to him and who expected great things from his genius, felt very much grieved at this apostacy and prayed fervently to Lord Śiva to reclaim her lost brother. As if in answer to this intercession Appar was seized with such a severe colic pain that he felt death itself would be a merciful relief — in fact he characterised his torture in his very first hymn as nothing less than "the pangs of death itself". The Jains who made large claims to possession of mystic and supernatural powers tried their best to cure him and it proved unavailing. Naturally Appar lent willing ears to the counsels of his sister who stated that the colic was nothing but the visitation of God for his forsaking the true religion of his forefathers and that if he repented and made amends by greater zeal and faith, Lord Śiva would heal him in a trice. The practice of Jainism seems, on the authority of Appar himself, to have stopped short of mere worn-out formalities and to have held nothing for a sincere seeker like the saint. Appar came back to Hinduism in an agony of repentance and prayer, and wonderful to relate, he was cured as he attests in his hymns. The event had such a profound effect upon him that he became one of the foremost of devotees and obtained the spiritual illumination he had sought for in his old religion.

It was to be expected that Appar should militantly attack the new fangled faiths of Buddhism and Jainism. His conversion to Jainism was hailed as a triumph by the Jains and a vouchsafing to the superior merit and truth of their religion. No less did his conversion to Śaivism, his saintly life and his stirring hymns constitute an open challenge to Jainism. Religions and sects in those days were largely personal equations and the spread or decline of one or the other depended to a large extent on the king. Appar lived in the Pallava kingdom and the Pallava king was a staunch Jain. The Jains who wielded immense influence over the king induced him to persecute Appar and make an example of him. Tradition and legend make out that Appar was as cruelly subjected to trials as Prahlada himself. Some of Appar's verses contain references to the hostility of his erstwhile co-religionists. Appar however came out safe from such trials and lived to a ripe old age.

One of such persecutions is stated to be that Appar was thrown into a room of fresh slaked lime which would have corroded and eaten away his limbs. Appar sang about the cool shade of the "Feet of the Lord" and when the doors of the room were opened a week after the saint was found unhurt, raptly singing the ten verses he had composed for his deliverence. The imagery in the first verse is developed below.

A traveller sets out early thinking that his journey will be through a pleasant and shady valley. He loses his way and finds himself in an arid desert. The burning sand is beneath his feet, the blazing sun above. There are no trees except the leafless piercing cactus and thorny shrubs. As far as his eyes roam there is nothing but the fiery ring of the horizon, not a green patch to rest his aching eyes. Now and then hot swirls of wind raise cloudlets of sand which blind him, and sting him and choke him. His tongue cleaves unto his mouth and his intense thirst makes him run after the mira-

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ge — false appearances of running water, illusions produced by the scorching sun and heated sand by which many an unwary bird and beast and man have been deluded and have lost their lives in running after. The loneliness of the desert haunts him and any pleasant sound of a living being would have been a relief, but the only sounds the traveller hears are that of the maddening cicada and the hoot of hawk-owl, evil prophet of doom. And he can neither stand nor go. Extreme misery and despair make him lose count of time ; to him it appears as if he has been there for ages. His life seems to be one dreadful nightmare in which it is his inexorable fate to be for ever wandering through a fiery desert. Listlessly, aimlessly he pushes forward, when to his surprise he finds that the sun had set and his senses come back to him.

And what is it that gleams in front ? Not water, surely ? Yes, undoubtedly, a clear expanse of it. And the almost dead traveller rushes madly into the lake and immerses himself again and again and gulps the waters avidly. Lotuses, lotuses everywhere in the lake. Swarms of bees in them make heavenly symphony. Soft petals of the lotus touch his body like healing balm. He tastes the nectar-like honey in the lotus cups. His dizzy eyes rest on the alternate blue of the lake, the red of the lotuses and the green of the leaves. And the mild balm of southern breeze, immortalised alike in Sanskrit and Tamil song, the Malayamarutam wafts over the waters and caresses his parched limbs like a beloved. And every tree and shrub is lush with tender leaf and bud and bloom, for it is the carnival of spring and Nature has renewed her youth. And Lo ! the full moon rises in the east blushing like some bedecked bride and floods the heavens and earth with her cool argentine splendour. And to crown all, there floats on the air strains of divinest music played on the vina and when the traveller led by the melody traces it, he lights upon a female of surpassing beauty and in her he finds the fulfilment of his life.

And now to Appar :

Like unto the flawless strains of vina,
And the rise of the moon at eventide,
And balmy caress of the breezes of the south,
And the flush of wanton spring,
And a lake with the murmur of bees,
Is the cool shade of the Feet of my Father and Lord.

The music and sense of the stanza of Appar can hardly be rendered in any translation. The traveller is man, the pilgrim of eternity on this earth, and his journey through the desert typifies the misery of Samsara, the never-ending chain of births and deaths with its attendant sorrows. When by the force of some Purvapunyam — prior merit — he catches hold of the Feet of the Lord, he has reached the cool shades of the Kalpataru — the wish fulfilling tree. He finds not only the fulfilment of the five senses — Manickavachakar says " Lord ! You came unto me and satisfied the cravings of all my five senses " — but of the spirit, and for him there is no more misery or wandering in the desert but eternal rest under the cool shade of the Tree of Life.

To the Bhakta the dry details of philosophy are necessary only to strengthen his will ; beyond that they are of no use to him. For he is treading on a path which is fitted very soon to lead him beyond the hazy and turbulent regions of reason, to lead him to the realm of realization. He, soon, through the mercy of the Lord, reaches a plane where pedantic and powerless reason is left far behind, and the mere intellectual groping through the dark gives place to the daylight of direct perception.

... Swami Vivekananda.

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GEORGE SANTAYANA AND VEDANTA

A. V. SUBRAMANIA AIYAR

THE object of this paper is to give a short account of the life and the philosophy of George Santayana and to show that in a few of its basic elements it has affinity with Indian Vedantic thought.

Santayana was born of Spanish parents, both of whom had lived for some years in the Phillippine Islands. His father had sailed round the world and had enough taste for literature to translate Seneca's plays from Latin to Spanish.

He was born in 1863. After a friendly separation from her husband, his mother left for U.S.A. leaving young Santayana with his father in Spain. After living in Spain till his ninth year Santayana went to America to join his mother. He had his secondary education there and his collegiate study at Harvard University. Here he learnt Philosophy under William James and Royce and developed a flair for it. After taking his degree he proceeded for further study to Germany, the country of masters like Kant, Schopenhauer and Hegel, who had profoundly influenced the philosophic thought of the 19th century. In Germany he came into contact for the first time with Greek philosophy, which impressed him very much. Some years later while he was serving as a teacher of Philosophy in his *alma mater* of Harvard he came to England for a specialised study of Plato and Aristotle under Henrey Jackson of Cambridge University. Santayana remained at Harvard as Professor of Philosophy for 23 years along with his masters James and Royce. Though his relationship with William James was not cordial on account of temperamental incompatibility which nothing could overcome, he gained the respect of the discerning public and the admiration of a whole generation of students, who were thrilled by his profound learning and eloquence. Santayana left Harvard in 1912 for Europe and remained there as a lone star among philosophic writers till his death in 1952. Europe saw two world wars during his stay. They deeply perturbed him and influenced his later thought to some extent.

George Santayana was a very voluminous writer. His masterpiece is the *Life of Reason,* which was published in five volumes in 1905 under the titles *Reason in Common Sense, Reason in Society, Reason in Religion, Reason in Art,* and *Reason in Science.* He had written earlier some poems and a number of essays in *Literary Criticism* on subjects like *the Sense of Beauty* and *Poetry and Religion,* which have the Santayana touch. But it was after the appearance of the *Life of Reason* that his fame as a philosopher of the front rank was firmly established. John Dewey, the American philosopher wrote of this book : 'We are grateful to Mr. Santayana for what he has given us, the most adequate contribution America has yet made, always excepting Emerson, to moral philosophy.' The book contains an acute and masterly survey of the achievement of the human intellect and mind throughout history in language of great force and brilliance. He himself spoke of it some years later as " a presumptive biography of the human intellect, which instead of the *Life of Reason,* might have been called the 'Romance of Wisdom' ". In 1913 his *Winds of Doctrine* was published. Ten years later, *Scepticism and Animal Faith,* a thought-provoking book, as an introduction to his second masterpiece, *The Realms of Being* (1927 to 1930) appeared. Till the end of his life he was writing essays and critiques on various philosophical subjects. In his lecture in *Ultimate Religion,* which he delivered at the Hague in 1936 during the tercentenary of Spinoza's birth, he gave a distilled essence, as it were, of his mature views on Religion and Philosophy in simple and telling language.

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SANTAYANA'S PHILOSOPHY

Santayana begins his preface to *Scepticism and Animal Faith* by saying, 'Here is one more system of philosophy' and adds, 'My system is not mine nor new.' But in fact he has not created any special philosophical system or school nor does his philosophy fit completely into the known systems such as Materialism, Naturalism, Idealism, Transcendentalism, Pragmatism, Instrumentalism, Existentialism, Behaviourism or other innumerable 'isms' of modern western metaphysical thought. Santayana's philosophy is not the less valuable on that account. There is a cogency in the core of his thought, which precludes it from being considered as some kind of eclecticism. The one thing that is evident is that the phenomenal growth of Science and the historic spirit in the 19th century had their effect on his thinking, which however was mostly shaped by the Greek masters among the ancients and Spinoza among the moderns. The many references to Indian Philosophy and thought, found scattered in his works show a clear grasp of their fundamentals, which extorted his admiration, if not full assent.

There is a view that his Philosophy is in essence Materialism and Naturalism, clothed in a religious and romantic literary garb. He himself has said : 'Now in natural philosophy I am a decided materialist — apparently the only one living — and I am well aware that idealists are fond of calling materialism too metaphysics, in rather an angry tone, so as to cast discredit upon it by assimilating it to their own systems. But my materialism for all that is not metaphysical.' In another place he writes : 'The necessity of naturalism as a foundation for all further serious opinions was clear to me from the beginning.' This does not mean that he is a materialist in the accepted philosophical sense of that word. Materialism, as Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has said 'is as old as philosophy'. Any one who considers that Matter is a reality, and that modern philosophic thought cannot ignore the conclusions of science and build any system, is not a materialist. Only he who holds that matter and the material world constitute the sole Reality and, repudiating spirit in its cosmic and mundane pervasiveness, postulates that there is nothing beyond what our senses see and nothing after death is an authentic materialist. In this sense the ancient Indian Charvakas and Lokayatikas were pure materialists and were more forthright than their contemporaries, the Greek Atomists or the modern materialists and rationalists of the 19th century. In Indian philosophy itself, there are both theistic and non-theistic schools, which consider matter to be real, eternal and separate without being liable to be called materialistic in their nature.

Santayana, for all the importance he attaches to matter, believes also in spirituality and spirit completely, as the most dynamic influence in the affairs of Man and the Universe. Some of his most beautiful and rhapsodical passages are on the glory of the spirit and its pivotal position in life and existence. He writes: 'Spirituality, then, lies in regarding existence merely as a vehicle for contemplation, and contemplation merely as a vehicle for joy ..... Spirit is not an instrument, but a realisation, a fruition. At every stage and wherever it peeps out through the interstices of existence, it is a contemplation of eternal things.' He further points out : 'The first philosophers, the original observers of life and nature were the best ; and I think only the Indians and the Greek naturalists, together with Spinoza have been right on the chief issue, the relation of man and his spirit to the universe.' Santayana is also of the view that the final glory of the spirit is its union with the Supreme which he calls Pure Being. About that he says : 'In some sense evidently pure being is the supreme being. May it then be identified with God ? I think that a religion is possible, which should have pure being for its object and that it might even become a popular cult. Brahminism as the initiated explain it seems to be actually such a religion.' He has shown an acute perception here. But he has wavered in other places and hesitated to identify his pure being with the personal

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God of religion. Santayana has also declared that the way of renunciation is the best and surest for release, though he has a personal preference for a different way. In a fine passage he writes : 'I myself have no passionate attachment to existence and value this world for the intuitions it can suggest, rather than for the wilderness of facts that compose it. *To turn away from it may be the deepest wisdom in the end.*' (italics mine) He has accepted the common Vedantic view that worldly life is inimical to spiritual life. A careful reading of his works unmistakably shows the Vedantic tinge of his outlook. He has expressed warm admiration for the best elements of Indian thought and philosophy, though in a few matters pertaining to them, he has, like most western philosophers, misjudged.

Writing about philosophers he observes : 'A philosopher could hardly have a higher ambition than to make himself the mouthpiece for the memory and judgment of his race.' He himself has fulfilled this role with distinction. He is probably the supreme master of English prose among modern philosophers. When it is remembered that he is a foreigner to the language of his choice his achievement is almost a miracle. Competent critics have observed that after Plato, Santayana is the most literary and artistic writer on Philosophy. It is usual to refer to him as a poet-philosopher. His true gift of poesy is reflected in the imaginative texture, the rich cadence and the wealth of metaphor found in his English prose. He has written so much over a period of 50 years that inconsistencies and differences in emphasis may be found, but these are trifles by the side of the solid core of wisdom and thought and penetrating insight into the fundamentals of life and existence, expressed in language of sustained power, brilliance and beauty in his works, which are a joy to read, and ponder over.

A PEOPLE OF GOD *

EDWARD J. MARTIN

TWICE, in recent years, men's eyes have been fixed on India. At the death of the world-statesman Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister, all the world shared India's sorrow. During the Chinese invasions of her territory, the world shared her fear and uncertainty.

Now, again, men have been looking at this ancient land. Last year's Eucharistic Congress held in Bombay and Pope Paul's visit there have helped them to appreciate a further aspect of India. What they saw was a truly religious people, a people of God.

Yet this same people is faced, today, with a momentous decision.

'Time is not all ; there is another side to our existence, and that is the eternal side.' These words of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, President of India, no doubt underline the spirituality natural to this people. But they also point up one of the fundamental questions the Indians must answer, a question that is being asked today in India's very soul. It is this : As the country struggles to take her place in the world as a secular, democratic state, what is the role that her *Sanatana Dharma*, her 'eternal religion,' will play ?

The problems that India faces in the process of growing into an industrialized nation are varied and complex. They range from the vital problems of finding sources for raw materials and markets for finished goods to the less concrete, but certainly equally impor-

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tant, cultural difficulties arising from the necessary re-examination of social and religious values inherited from her tradition. The economic problems, though grave, have been faced and answered in similar circumstances by other countries. In time, with the assistance of these countries, India too will undoubtedly solve her own economic difficulties. The cultural problems, however, are India's alone. Only she can truly understand them, and thus only she can ultimately find their solution. And at the heart of these cultural problems—for India as for perhaps no other country—lies this question of religion.

When we contemplate the long procession of Indian history — as anyone must do if he is to understand India today — one of the fundamental notes we find is a consistent and profound religious sense.

Two of the world's major religions sprang up in India: Hinduism and Buddhism. Traces of Hinduism have been found even in the Indus Valley civilization, which flourished perhaps as early as 2500 B.C. Hinduism today is the religion of 85 per cent of the Indian people. Buddhism, which for two and half millenniums has exercised a profound influence across central Asia, China and Japan, also originated there. What is more, Islam, Christianity and Judaism came to India during the long centuries of her history, and all found a home there.

The culture that has developed from this meeting of souls is characterized by a richness and complexity that are based on a wide spirit of tolerance and universality, and a deep concern for the individual.

But suddenly, almost within the span of a single generation, this culture and this way of life proved to be insufficient. India, which after partition in 1947 included about 350,000,000 people, had shaken off its foreign rulers and now stood alone. But she found she was standing in a new world — a world of science and technology.

The Indians, however, had always been quick to learn from the world about them. This ability was not lacking in those guiding India's destinies at this crucial point. The influence of the British — and, even more, the very essence of Indian culture and society — demanded that the new nation should choose a democratic form of government. The Indian *panchayat,* or village council, is believed to be the world's oldest instrument of democratic government. Thus the inhuman means that certain countries have employed in the service of economic progress could find no place here. The goal must be reached by free men.

India had learned from her own traditions, and from the often sad experiences of other nations, that freedom of religion is essential to the dignity of man. Although the great majority of her people profess Hinduism, complete freedom of conscience is recognized by the Indian Constitution as a right belonging to each of her citizens. The 25th Article of the Constitution states:

'Subject to public order, morality and health, and to the other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practise and propagate religion.'

This declaration, so consistent with Indian religious thought, was reaffirmed by Pope John XXIII, who wrote in the encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris*: 'Every human being has the right to honour God according to the dictates of an upright conscience, and the right to profess his religion privately and publicly.' It is in insights such as these into the inestimable value of the individual human being that the great religious traditions of the world will find a common ground.

Is the answer, then, to the problem of religion in modern India to be found in this declaration of tolerance by the Indian Constitution? Is the real problem solved by the legal recognition that there are things that are Caesar's and things that are God's? The answer, of course, is no.

The recognition of religious values by law is not sufficient. The problem, to be truly

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answered, must finally be answered by each individual. As Rabindranath Tagore, one of the great poet-philosophers of India, wrote :

'We must never forget that in the present day those people who have got their political freedom are not necessarily free, they are merely powerful . . . In the so-called free countries, the majority of the people are not free ; they are driven by the minority to a goal that is not even known to them. This becomes possible only because people do not acknowledge moral and spiritual freedom as their object. They create huge eddies with their passions, and they feel dizzily inebriated with the mere velocity of their whirling movement, taking that to be freedom. But the doom that is waiting to overtake them is as certain as death — for man's truth is moral truth, and his emancipation is in the spiritual life.'

Strange words, perhaps, to many men who would call themselves modern. Strange words, but words that have been repeated countless times, in countless forms, throughout Indian history. The *Manusamhita,* or *Code of Manu,* which appears to have been written centuries before the birth of Christ, counsels even kings to 'learn to carefully shun the ten vices springing from love of pleasure and the eight proceeding from wrath, which all end in misery.'

Even in a nation whose government is democratic — indeed, especially in such a one — it can hardly be overemphasized that, as one Indian thinker put it, 'the problem of government is the ethical problem of the individual projected onto the field of the state.' The personal integrity of the rulers and the moral sense of the citizens are the keys to sound government. No constitutional guarantees or administrative techniques can save a government or state lacking these essentials.

Will India remain true to her traditions ? There is a Hindu scripture that teaches :

'Just as a candle cannot burn without a fire, so man cannot live without a spiritual life. The spirit dwells in all men, but not all men are aware of this. Happy is the life of him who knows this, and unhappy his life who does not know it.'

Today, in India, it is the government official in New Delhi and the steelworker in Jamshedpur who, in the face of the marvellous world that modern science and technology has opened to them, must rediscover the value of their tradition. Tomorrow, it will be the turn of the rural village dweller. All India must reexamine the ideals that have built her culture.

The world again demands, as it has done many times in the past, that the man of India justify his culture and his way of life. India cannot refuse to answer, but the answer must be sought for critically and intelligently. As the great leaders of present-day India have not ceased to stress, the total, blind acceptance of what the past has evolved would be as great a disaster as its total rejection.

As the international man looks at the cultures of the world, he cannot sympathize with the Inquisitions of the past and the racial disorders of the present that he finds in the countries of the West. So, too, the caste system of India and the practice of untouchability (though this is now forbidden by law) are sources of confusion to him.

The caste system was for India a solution to the natural problems caused by a diversity of races. It was an attempt to avoid friction while granting racial freedom. But the attempt was not fully successful. About the institution of untouchability, however, there is no argument whatever.

The soul of Gandhi was moved by the fate of India's untouchables, whom he called *Harijans,* 'children of God'. 'I have never been able to reconcile myself to untouchability,' he said. 'I have always regarded it as an excrescence. It has been handed down to us from generations past, but so are many evil practices to this day.'

And again, in words that should be heeded by all the nations of the world, Gandhi declared :

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'In my opinion there is no such thing as inherited or acquired superiority. I believe implicitly that all men are born equal. All — whether born in India or in England or America or in any circumstances whatsoever — have the same soul as any other.'

It is with the help of sentiments such as these that India's people must scrutinize — in the light that modern science and the cultures and creeds of other nations have provided — the ideals and traditions that have formed her soul. It will be essentially a religious process, the meditation of a people. The task may prove painful, but India will not avoid it. 'Pitiful is the one who, fearing failure, makes no beginning,' says another Hindu scripture.

For India, the search for the meaning of the modern world has already begun. As to its outcome, no one can be sure. Nehru himself wrote :

'To endeavour to understand and describe the India of today would be the task of a brave man ; to say anything about tomorrow's India would verge on rashness. Indeed, at no time in the world's history has it been more difficult to forecast the future of any country or of the world.'

The value of the search, however, is not a matter of doubt. Throughout the long years of her history, India has come into contact with many peoples and many cultures. She has not gone forth with soldiers and arms to build empires ; rather, more often she has had to suffer the rule of outsiders. But India has been patient. She has suffered much, learned much ; most important, she has taught much. India has given the world the institution of democracy, she has brought it spices and cotton textiles and other material benefits ; the 'Arabic' numerals, too, which replaced the impractical Roman notation and made many modern arithmetical calculations possible, originated with her, as did the zero, so vital for the decimal system.

But beyond the political and material and scientific benefits that India has offered to man, and that she will undoubtedly continue to offer as her economy develops, there has been something far more significant. In the essential art of living, in the process of man's understanding of himself, in the subtler and deeper realms of mind and spirit, are to be found India's greatest contributions. And these, we have every reason to hope, she will recognize as part of her destiny in the future, as they have always been in the past.

Dr. Radhakrishnan has said :

'The days of cultural tribalism are over; we no more have separate cultural universes. East and West have come together never to part again, and they must settle down in some kind of peaceful coexistence which will eventually grow into active, friendly co-operation. That is essential for the future of the world, the welfare of the world itself.'

'In finding the solution of our problem,' wrote Tagore, 'we shall have helped to solve the world problem as well.' And he continued :

'What India has been, the whole world is now. The whole world is becoming one country through scientific facility. And the moment is arriving when you must also find a basis of unity that is not political. If India can offer to the world her solution, it would be a contribution to humanity. There is only one history — the history of man. All national histories are merely chapters in the larger one. And we are content in India to suffer for such a great cause.'

India must bear witness. If she does, her affirmation of the value of religion in the modern, secular state will help to shape the future of man.

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DEFINITION AND FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY

N. SATYANARAYANA

Definition of Philosophy

With the emergence of schools like Logical positivism, Language-Analysis etc., the debate in philosophy centres round what philosophy is. In order to discuss the problem, in a pragmatically effective way, it will be easy if a few generally accepted definitions of philosophy are taken for examination, although at present there are more definitions than the philosophies themselves. This naturally leads to a further question : What is the function of philosophy ? A critical examination of the histories of philosophy — of the West—show that it is an intellectual enterprise or activity, rather than a subject or body of knowledge, for along the march of time we see that once its branches of knowledge became definite i.e. could be proved (experimented, verified etc), they became separate from the parent body. But still philosophy marched on to progress and continues to do so as these branches themselves give rise to certain philosophical questions and as there are regions which these positive sciences are not competent to enter. Russel defines philosophy : " . . . All these provinces of knowledge (positive sciences) border on a circumambient area of the unknown. As one comes into the border regions and beyond, one passes from science into the field of speculation. The speculative activity is a kind of exploration, and this among other things, is what philosophy is."[1] It is also defined as a persistent attempt 'to see life steadily and see it as a whole', 'a systematic search for meanings and values', 'a profound probing into nature of reality', 'to discover the nature of the universe, our relation to it and our prospects in it, to the dual end of satisfying our heads in their demand that curiosity be answered, and our hearts in their demand that human life and human experience be rendered as significant and worthwhile as possible'. It is also defined as 'love of wisdom' although no two philosophers agree on its connotation.

Some Problems of Philosophy

These definitions of philosophy can be examined only if an enquiry is made into problems that are still left to philosophy, their nature and scope. The problem that confronts all contemplative minds is whether it is a boon or a curse on man that not only is he conscious, but is conscious of his consciousness, which distinguishes him from other animals. Since childhood he is confronted with problems, some he understands and others he does not. Naturally these unsolved problems cause restlessness in his mind as he grows maturer and as he turns his attention to various sources for enlightenment. The enquiry yields fruitful results if the influence of tradition is first examined, as most of the problems arise only in relation to something or other. To take an example : A Hindu is told that the Law of Karma is operative on all human beings, even *devas* and animals. Methods are prescribed (as one person is different from another, and as each school of Hindu thought has its own method to be followed) which liberate the soul from the fetters of bondage. Practice of disciplines is common to all religions, although it takes different form in each case.

Now a reflective and bold mind has to face certain questions : What is soul ? Is it a substance ? It is admitted by adherents of all religions (with the exception of early Buddhism) that soul is a spirit. Then the problem is what is the relation between the spiritual and the material ? Is it operative on the physical realm or on the metaphysical ? If a benevolent God had created the world what accounts for the evil ?[2] What is one's duty towards his fellow beings in the organisation

[1] Russell, Bertrand : *Wisdom of the West*, p. 6.

[2] Tendulkar & Others : *Gandhiji : His Life & Work*, pp. 321, 322.

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of society? What is one's role in the political life of the community? This latter question demands a further one. What is the just and correct economic organization of society and what are the psychological motives that prompt human behaviour in its complex forms? These questions lead to a much discussed, never agreed, complicated, inclusive question: What is good life?

Study of Man from Without

In order to know and understand the probable answers to the above problems, one of the ways is to study man from without. Man always wonders what exactly is his relation to nature. Is the Reality one or many? If it is one how did this plurality come into existence? If it is many what is the relation between its various parts? What is man's place in the cosmic scheme of things?

a) Physical Sciences: Do the physical sciences solve this problem? The effect of the theory of relativity on man's understanding of nature could be taken, as an example. Bertrand Russell writes: 'The substitution of space-time for space and time has made the category of substance less applicable than formerly, since the essence of substance was persistence through time, and there is now no cosmic time. The result of this is to turn the physical world into four dimensional continuum of events, instead of a series of three dimensional states, of a world composed of persistent bits of matter. A second important feature of the relativity-theory is the abolition of force, particularly gravitational force and the substitution of different causal laws having to do only with the neighbourhood of an event, not with an influence exerted from a distance, such as gravitation formerly seemed to be.'[3] Although it helps us to discard some theories of creation, space and time that are in vogue, it does not solve the problem completely.

b) Biological Sciences: Then there are sciences which are on the borderland between the purely physical and psychological. The theory of evolution may be taken as an illustration. According to this theory man is only a late product in the process of evolution. He has acquired certain characteristics in the process of change but he shares his nature with other animals. It also postulates that it is the fittest in nature that survives. In this theory, there are certain missing links which have not been explained. Though it adds to the fund of human knowledge, it does not offer any solution to problems such as: What is my duty towards my fellow beings? What is good life? Why did life begin at all? What is soul? Is it real or unreal?

c) Social Sciences: Political structure: If the example of a society which adopts democratic institutions in its political organizaion is taken, the underlying belief is that individuals are capable of choosing what is good for them.[4] Given the opportunity there is the possibility of the full flowering of the personality of the individual in particular and society in general. It is only the wearer who knows where the shoe pinches. These ideas have certain implications which even the staunchest advocate of democracy may not be aware. This implies that man is free to choose what he wants. This leads to the classical controversy of free will *versus* determinism. It also treats every individual as equal to the other, although we are conscious that individuals vary from a Chenghizkhan to a Buddha, from a money-lender to a Mahatma Gandhi. There is also another question: Can one be free in an organization, as it implies uniformity and consequently regimentation? Again organization insists on conformity, without which, it cannot function. One loses one's freedom to that extent and this field is open only to philosophy and it alone is competent to enter to investigate into it.

Economic Organization

Every society must adopt a particular form of economic organization. It is true that economics, analysed ultimately, studies the economic needs of individuals, but the study is descriptive and not valuative; hence it does

[3] Russell, Bertrand: *Space and Time.*

[4] Bose, N. K.: *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 122.

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not tell us what is the best type of economic organization. Philosophies like Marxism, Guild Socialism, Syndicalism, Anarchism, Gandhian idea of trusteeship of property have brought in their train new challenges to the old ideas of property. Here the problem which originated in economics encompasses politics and hence it is the thinker who should study how the economic structure of society conditions politics and ultimately the freedom of each individual. For example when a state owns means of production and a single party rules the country, how does it affect the political minority ? This is the problem of a monolithic society both in economics and politics. Democracy is the existence of parties compatible with certain principles. As it is a matter of common knowledge that a few able people dominate the parties and they become the reflections of their ideas and not of the people in general, although a democratic minded individual may always try to feel the pulse of the people. This brief discussion of some of these problems is meant to show that there is an area left uncovered which philosophy alone can view as a whole, studying every aspect, not in isolation but in a wider context.

Study of Man from Within

Though natural sciences and social sciences help in shedding light on man's problems and his relations with regard to himself, nature outside do seem to help very little to understand man as a whole. As an example the study of human motivation helps one to understand human behaviour. Betrand Russell writes : 'We decided, contrary to the view of the behaviourists, that there are important facts which cannot be known except when the observer and the observed are the same person.'[5] This justifies the study of man from within.

Yoga

Here it is interesting to refer to Yoga philosophy. It prescribes not only postures and external and internal methods of purification but also leads one further and further on to the path of 'realization'.[6] In this process, it is said that at one stage man acquires certain paranormal powers such as 'distant vision', knowledge of the 'past and the future'.[7] It is also said that some Yogis acquired knowledge of physics. If this is demonstrated further, many of our concepts, in epistemology, theory of time and universe and man's place in it will have got to be modified. For example it raises several issues : How is man able to perceive reality in its essence ? Is it because he is made of the same nature, though a late product in the evolution ? If that is proved, it does away with many controversies like spirit *versus* matter, vitalism *versus* mechanism and so on. It also raises several issues like : What is soul and bondage (although Yoga philosophers have come to their own conclusion) ? Is bondage merely psychological or metaphysical ? If knowledge of this field develops further and definite data is available, a time may come when all sciences and philosophies will have a meeting point on a very definite ground.

The mystics of different religions have spoken differently. But there is a common ground where they meet. Swami Vivekananda says : '. . . Mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth. This is the real science of religion. As mathematics in every part of the world does not differ, so the mystics do not differ. They are all similarly constituted and situated. Their experience is the same.'[8] They believe there is bondage and one can attain freedom if one follows a particular method. With the exception of a few religions like early Buddhism and Confucianism, all others believe in the grace of God. They differ from one another in their explanations of the relation between God and souls, God and matter, and souls and matter. How is it

[5] Russell, Bertrand : *An Outline of Philosophy*, p. 306.

[6] Swami Vivekananda : 'On Raja-Yoga' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. VI, p. 55).

[7] Das Gupta, S. N. : *Yoga Philosophy*, pp. 272, 278, 339, 440.

[8] Swami Vivekananda : 'Religion & Science' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. VI, p. 47).

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they differ so much when they deal with one and the same subject ?

There are thinkers who did not believe in the immortality of the soul. H. G. Wells in his *Science of life* writes, 'I do not believe in the least either the body of H. G. Wells, or his personality is immortal, but I do believe that the growing process of thought, knowledge and will, of which we are parts, of which I am a part and of which you are a part, may go on growing in range and power for ever. I think man is immortal but not men' (p. 135).

Study of Indian Philosophy as a Development from Within

The general topics of discussion in Indian Philosophy are Atman, Brahman, world and liberation, of course, with the solitary exception of the Charvakas which is described by its critics, as a 'passing phase of the mind'. In the Upaniṣads, these questions are discussed freely without trying to systematize the views. Later in the age of systems various seers tried to systematize the views. They have cosmologies, metaphysics and theory of knowledge. But here we want to suggest how these systems could be viewed to lead to some final position. Nyaya-vaiśeṣika, with its logic and physical plurality, postulated plurality of souls standing in relation to the Universe and God as creator. Sāṅkhyā and Yoga have also held similar views. In Viśiṣṭādvaita souls are depicted to form the body of the Lord. Here essentially a step is taken towards the Absolute. In Advaita the *ātman* is considered to be no other than Brahman. Here in this process, the mind turns more and more inward to the extent that it frees itself from all sense of reliance on things external. This is not same as the absolute idealism of Berkeley. Hunter Mead observes, 'There appears to be no escape from his relentless logic, the most innocent flirtation with *esse est percipi* leads inexorably to the all-devouring embrace of the absolute'.

Dr. Mahadevan interpreting the concept of *yugas* observes : 'The theory of four ages (*catur yuga*) does not mean that the time process is cyclical, but rather that it is like a spiral. Nor does it mean that the four *yugas* should necessarily succeed one another. All the ages are all the time there. And the progress of the world implies that *kali, dvāpara,* and *treta* should, to a greater and greater extent, get sublimated in *kṛta yuga*. Kṛta in the terminology of the game of dice is the highest throw which includes all the others, *kṛta yuga*, also called *satya yuga*, thus means the whole-age of which the others are but parts and distortions.'[9]

It may be further interpreted in relation to one's spiritual growth. One lives in *kali yuga* in the stage of gross ignorance and goes up to *kṛta,* passing through *dvāpara* and *treta* reaching final illumination.

The theory of Karma also can be looked at from this perspective. Karma is described to be of three types—pure merit, mixture of merit and demerit and complete demerit. The first of the kind is supposed to be born as gods, the second as men and the third as animals. This may also be taken to mean that one who does purely meritorious work, acquires godly nature and one who indulges in works of complete demerit that of animals and the others who do both good and bad deeds acquire the human nature. But one can attain liberation only when one is free from all these three types of Karma, even the purely meritorious, as attachment to any leads to bondage. But in order to get over the lower tendencies noble acts and pious deeds are to be performed. In his sermon to Sadhu Simha, Buddha says : 'It is true, Simha, that I denounce activities, but only activities that lead to the evil in words, thoughts or deeds. It is true, Simha, I preach extinction but only the extinction of pride, lust, evil thought and ignorance, not that of forgiveness, charity, and truth.'

(To be continued)

[9] Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan : *Time and Timeless*, p. 83.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D. is Head of the Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras and is not new to our readers. In his article 'The Bhagavata' he has dealt with the theme of the *Bhagavata Purana* in a brief but clear manner.

Sri R. Ramakrishnan, M.A.L.T., is Headmaster, N. N. R. High School, Nangavaram. Here in the article 'Epistolary Flames from the Vivekananda Fire' he brings out some of the salient points in Swamiji's life.

'The Dynamic Power of Vedanta' was a lecture given by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder-leader of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, at the Society and has been made available to us by Mrs. Mallika Clare Gupta, a disciple of the Swami, now living in India. We shall be publishing some more of these lectures, which are available, from time to time.

Sri T. R. Rajagopala Aiyar is an Advocate from Cauvery Nagar, Trichy District.

Sri A. V. Subramania Aiyar is from Tirunelveli.

Rev. Edward J. Martin, S.J., who teaches mathematics at Gonzaga High School, Washington, D.C. is a student of oriental philosophies and religions.

Sri N. Satyanarayana is a research scholar in the Department of Philosophy, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

RESIST EVIL AT ALL COSTS

India has had for 18 years patiently undergone sporadic attacks on its borders and other types of violations from across its boundaries with a view to live in peace with the neighbours. But this was taken as a sign of weakness of the nation and recently Pakistan mounted regular attacks once in the Kutch and again, before the ink of the cease-fire agreement was dry, sent its troops, as it is now firmly established by the U.N. observers' reports, as infiltrators into Kashmir, followed by a regular invasion of India by armoured divisions, thus leaving India no choice but to fight in self defence.

Our army and air force have fought, and taken heavy toll of the enemy's sophisticated tanks and planes, with valour, determination and nobility any country can be proud of. They have established, leaving no doubt in anyone's mind, that if India did not retaliate the earlier attacks, it was not due to its inability to do so but in the interest of international peace. But the leaders of Pakistan, as it appears from their public statements, seem to be getting ready again to create some more trouble. It is therefore necessary that India remains vigilant and watchful as the Prime Minister himself has said.

The Indian Government is to be congratulated on the bold stand it had taken at the proper moment and for having acted speedily, to vindicate the national cause. That India has no designs on anyone's territory was clear when it accepted the call for simple cease-fire without hesitation if only the other party was ready for it. However it is beyond one's imagination how anyone could have asked India to cease-fire unilaterally, as if it was the aggressor.

History seems to be repeating itself once again. The world has yet to learn that appeasement of an aggressor does not pay. A quarter of a century seems to make people

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forget a lesson that was learnt at a heavy cost, in men and suffering. The same tactics of placating one country at the cost of another is still being persisted upon and do they, who do such placating, expect any different result? Reason and logic will say no. Will reason prevail? — that is yet to be seen. Whatever may be the case, India must be prepared to face any situation. It has to become more and more strong and progressively self-reliant and henceforth resist every evil that is heaped upon it, whether through diplomatic channels or otherwise, with determination and full force.

24-9-1965.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

FROM INDIA TO THE PLANET MARS: A STUDY OF A CASE IN SOMNAMBULISM WITH GLOSSOLALIA: By T. Flournoy. Introduction by C. T. K. Chari. Pub.: University Books, New Hyde Park, N.Y. Pp. xxxvi+457. Price $ 10.00.

This book was first published some sixty years ago and is now re-edited with an Introduction by Dr C. T. K. Chari. The book gives a very vivid account of the mediumship of Helene Smith, the pseudonym of Elise Muller who joined a spiritualist circle and who soon became remarkable for her peculiar experiences. This book gives an interesting account of the various seances in which she claimed to be the queen Simindini of the fifteenth century in South India, claimed to be Maria Antoinette, the Queen of France and later claimed to have visions from the planet Mars. How far these experiences were genuine is the question that is discussed in this book. Psychologists like McDougall paid a tribute to the richness and variety of the phenomena presented and to the thoroughness and competence with which this case was studied. Sceptics nevertheless scoffed at the whole thing and the author of the Introduction who adopts as his formula "It is better to err through excess of caution and strictness of method than to run the risk of being sometimes deceived", has appraised these experiences of the medium to a searching analysis. Helene's impersonation of the Queen of France is discounted by Flournoy who discovered glaring differences between the known handwriting of the Queen and that of the medium. As for the other experiences of the medium, Dr Chari is of the view that they are nothing more than the psychological states of the medium herself. They are probably allotropic modifications or the phenomena of Polimorphism of her personality.

The account given in the book about Helene Smith is very fascinating, though much of it may be explainable on the basis of imitations due to autosuggestons and so on. It would be foolish to be credulous and believe every statement as true, while it would be equally foolish to deny completely the possibility of such experiences. The book contains eleven chapters and the chapters on the Martian circle are interesting in the extreme though whether one could give credence to all that the medium says she experienced is open to question. It may be that the book reminds the author of the Conclusion of a mountain which gave birth to a mouse. But the lay man is impressed that science has at last found a way of judging and evaluating these psychic factors which were till now emphatically repudiated by the orthodox scientists.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

GERMAN EXISTENTIALISM: MARTIN HEIDEGGER. Translated and with an Introduction by D. D. Runes. Pub.: Philosophical Library Inc., 15, East 40 Street, New York-16, U.S.A. Price $ 2.75.

This small volume represents the speeches, statements and appeals by Martin Heidegger, the famous German Existentialist, after he was made the Rector of Freibudg University. The philosopher's identification with National Socialism of Hitler was so complete that he drew upon the exploits of the Dictator of Germany to support his Existentialism. He became a spokesman for National Socialism, glorified and justified the brutalities of Hitler and elevated them to philosophical principles. Dr Runes has given us very choice selections of the speeches of this philosophical apostate and the records of newspapers of his time. All these make a very painful reading and Croce seems to be justified when he described Heideggar as one who dishonoured philosophy. Dr Runes' aim in these collections is well indicated.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

TULASIDASA: By Chandra Kumari Handoo. Pp. xxii+300. Price Rs. 18.00 Orient Longmans, Calcutta-13.

The publication of this book is an important event in the progress of hagiographical studies in India. It is indeed strange that, in spite of all the work that has been done in Hindi on Tulasidasa, no work on a scale approaching this has appeared in English since Grierson. And the publication of such work, in which we could get an authentic and comprehensive study of the greatest poet-saint in Hindi, was long overdue. The author is to be congratulated for her interest in Tulasidasa and his works. For there are few better fitted for the task than Srimati Chandra Kumari Handoo, who combines the philosophical knowledge and devotional attitude with a critical temper so necessary for the interpretation of Tulasidasa. She has a rare capacity for putting what she has to say in a manner worthy of her holy

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subject. She indicates the method of dealing with her subject in these words: 'My interest in him is devotional and spiritual rather than intellectual or literary. It is my special desire to deal with him as a practising student of religion and follow him as far as possible in his path of spiritual practice.' The author has not only taken great pains to collect and critically sift available information about her subject's life, but also presented a unified and meaningful interpretation of Tulasi's works, which highlights the primordial values of Indian culture. The author not only sums up the results that have been arrived at by the past and present Tulasi scholars, but wages a bold battle against many a view supposed to be critical and authentic, but lacking in spirit.

Tulasidasa was one of India's greatest saints; he was, according to our author, born in 1497 A.D. and passed away in 1623 at the ripe age of 125 years full of honour and glory. The spiritual halo shed by him has not died out to this day. Millions of people even today sing his songs and compositions and derive spiritual consolation and illumination. His works reveal a mind at once devout, aesthetic and penetrating. Though Tulasi chose Hindi as a medium of his expression for the benefit of all, he was also a profound scholar in Sanskrit. The *Ramacharitamanasa*, his *magnum opus*, is considered as a scripture by all pious Hindus. Embodying as it does the essence of Vedas and Vedanta, it broadcasts the spiritual heritage of India to one and all who can read and understand Hindi. Valmiki's Sri Rama, the perfect embodiment of *dharma*, has become in Tulasi's hands, the greatest *avatar*, the Purushottama of the *Gita*.

The plan of the work is simple: Part I contains Tulasi's life in 13 chapters and Part II on his works in 2 chapters, in which questions of genuineness, contents etc. are discussed. The last two chapters are devoted to Tulasi's attitude to women and his ideals. The first part, on Tulasi's life, calls for little comment. The author has used the biographical material with skill and sane criticism. The discussion on the works is convincing.

There may be a few points in which comment of disagreement may be made: The author says that Ramananda, a follower of Sri Ramanuja, 'shook off the narrow fetters imposed by Sri Ramanuja on his followers' (p. 17). The opposite is the fact. Shaking off the narrow fetters of tradition Sri Ramanuja gave a liberal interpretation of Vedantic theism by his life and deeds; it is his followers, like the followers of many a great teacher in the past, who imposed narrow fetters on the creed of Sri Ramanuja. That is why Ramananda had to come to the North and take shelter there. Another point is that, according to our author, 'the Kaikeyi of Valmiki is a female edition of Ravana' and that Tulasi 'softens the original character to a great extent' (p. 181). Even according to Valmiki, the first and foremost biographer of Sri Rama, Kaikeyi despite all her defects had sincere love for Sri Rama and drew the same from him. Her love for Sri Rama could not easily be erased from her mind, till Manthara poisoned her mind regarding the fate that would overtake Bharata and herself. When Manthara told Kaikeyi that Rama was going to be crowned, she received the news with happiness and gave her a necklace as reward. These remarks, however, do not lessen the value of this interesting study.

Now it only remains to express once more the deep gratitude that the devotees of Tulasi must feel for the appearance of this valuable study. Can we hope for similar works on Mira and Surdasa?

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA.

IN SEARCH OF A YOGI: By Dom Denys Routledge. Jaico Publishing House, Bombay-1. Pp. 357. Price Rs. 4.00.

Of many books that appear on or about India one can broadly distinguish three groups: (1) Profound and sympathetic studies like that of Count Keyserling; (2) gutter inspector's report like that of Miss Mayo and (3) seemingly sympathetic travellogues with concealed sarcasm beneath the surface. The present book belongs to the third group.

This is an account of a journey by Father Routledge, a Benedictine monk. While staying in India, he became curious about the nature of Hinduism and the idea of a Hindu yogi. So he made a journey (1959-60) from Banaras up towards the source of Ganges which he thinks is also the source of Hinduism. Unfortunately this pilgrim neither finds the source of the Ganges nor that of Hinduism. He is unable to find a true yogi who possesses the *siddhis* as described by Patanjali in his *Yogasutras*.

The plan of the book is complex; it is bristling with unnecessary details, dissertations and descriptions of trivial things and events. It is difficult to believe in the veracity of events that happened to the author.

A reader will find many incredible things in the book; Hindus deny the existence of sin (p. 15); the etymology of the term 'yoga' is disputed (p. 45); one of the main purposes of the *Gita* was to re-establish the *Yogasutras* as taught by Patanjali and bring it back to favour (p. 49); Krishna's morals (as related in the Puranas) are deplorable and that is no bar to his entry into the Hindu Pantheon (67); the author is unable to find why Banaras should be the most sacred city in India; he accepts the suggestion of a doubtful authority, one Dr Panikkar, a Catholic priest, that Banaras is sacred as Ganges at that point turns north towards the Himalayas (71). Not to bore the reader we can stop with these few specimens.

The author, at the end of the book, has devoted a few paragraphs to the Ramakrishna Mission. He thinks that the 'rejection of all dogma and religious belief was one of the basic ideas of Ramakrishna' (p. 343). His dialogue with a monk of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, if it is correctly reported, reveals neither depth nor understanding.

The book flourishes the *Nihil obstat* and *Imprimatur* which are a declaration that a book is considered to be free from doctrinal or moral error; this may be from the Catholic point of view, but not certainly from the Hindu standpoint.

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA.

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REINCARNATION: By E. D. Walker. Publishers: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. Pages: 375. Price $5.00.

This book, the first of its kind on reincarnation to appear in the West, was first published in 1888. Thereafter it has run into a number of editions and the present one brings it up-to-date with several revisions by the editors. The author was a full-fledged theosophist and naturally his views are strongly coloured by the theories of that school. He studies the approach to the subject in the major religions of the world, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and also the views of eminent thinkers in Greece, Egypt and other Mediterranean countries. He follows up the discussion with apt quotations from thinkers and poets of Europe and America; Quotations from the Indian sources are included, the bulk of them being from the *Light of Asia* (by Sir Edwin Arnold).

The central thought of the work is that all life is a manifestation of a consciousness in evolution. The evolution proceeds from the lower to the higher, from the lesser to the greater, from the inconscient to the superconscient. This consciousness works out its growth by individualising itself in multiple forms called variously the egos, the souls etc. and pursuing a line of development which registers, as it ascends, a more and more overt organisation of awareness and direction. In this progression the human stage is the most important in as much as it is only man who can give conscious direction to the evolution.

It is with this background that the author considers the significance of the phenomenon of death, transmigration, heredity etc. He rejects the popular notion of men being reborn in animal bodies for their sins. He rightly points out that the writings of old thinkers like Plato, Plotinus etc. are not to be taken literally but as underlining in a graphic manner the effect of the tendencies, *samskaras*, formed by our actions during life time. The soul does not go back to an inferior status. It is only the formations of unfulfilled strong desires and hopes that detach themselves from the central being and go where they are drawn by affinity.

The selections from the leading scientists of the last century emphasising the continuity of life — shall we say consciousness — in the universe, the indestructibility of energy, and the existence of a nisus in creation pushing every element to change itself into its next higher form, are marshalled to substantiate the doctrine of reincarnation and give the lie direct to the dogmas of certain religions which look askance at this important truth of nature.

M. P. PANDIT.

BENGALI

SRI 'MA' DARSHAN, Part III.: By Swami Nityatmananda. Publishers: General Printers and Publishers, 119, Dharmatola Street, Calcutta. Price Rs. 5.

This is the third part of the engaging account of conversations with 'M' — the renowned writer of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. The talks cover a wide field: Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Ma, Swami Vivekananda, the background of the *Gospel*, celebrities like Girish and others who figure in that account. Master Mahasaya's views on Indian culture, spiritual life, world-religions etc. are discussed in an informal way.

The book is a valuable addition to Sri Ramakrishna literature. It deserves to be rendered into English for the benefit of a larger public.

M. P. PANDIT.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SUMMER SEMINAR AT THOUSAND ISLAND PARK, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

1965

Swami Nikhilananda returned to Thousand Island Park on August 7th after visiting Europe for a month. The usual summer seminar started on August 15th and lasted for a week. Swami Nikhilananda explained the 18th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita to twenty-three students who daily attended the seminar. They came from different parts of the country and included a Christian minister, teachers, businessmen and a psychiatrist.

Thousand Island Park is associated with the hallowed memory of Swami Vivekananda who spent six weeks there. The cottage where he lived was acquired by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center in 1947. It is the summer retreat for the Swamis, the intimate workers of the Center and visiting students. The village situated on the St. Lawrence River is considered one of the scenic places of beauty of the United States of America.

During the summer months the students assembled every day at 4-30 p.m. in the Chapel of the Vivekananda Cottage, which was occupied by Swami Vivekananda, for the purpose of meditation. The place is becoming increasingly popular among the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda who consider it a sacred place. During the summer, stray visitors often drop in to show their respect to the Vivekananda Shrine. Among the visitors this year were the Indian Consul General of San Francisco and his wife.

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Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LII NOVEMBER 1965 No 7

MAHASAMADHI

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing away of His Holiness Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, the ninth President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission on Wednesday, October 6, 1965 at 6-50 p.m. at the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan, Calcutta.

Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, known as Nirmal in his pre-monastic life, was born on 15th December, 1888 in a village named Baganchra, three miles from Śāntipur in the District of Nadia in West Bengal. After graduating from the Calcutta University, he joined the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in January, 1910. He was an initiated disciple of the Holy Mother, and was ordained as a Sannyasin by Swami Brahmananda in 1916. He had also ample opportunities of coming into contact with the other direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He worked in various capacities in the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He was for some time at the Udbodhan Office where he helped in editing the monthly Bengali magazine, *Udbodhan*. He was then posted in 1917 to the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, district Almora, to become its President soon after, and to continue as such from 1918 to 1927. In March 1922 he was appointed a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Mission. In 1927 he was sent to San Francisco as the head of the Vedanta Centre there; but was recalled to India in 1929 to become the Assistant Secretary of the whole Organisation with its headquarters at Belur. In May, 1938 he became the General Secretary of the Order, its Vice-President in March 1962 and its President on 4th August 1962, which position he occupied till the last.

He was noted for his saintliness, austerity, scholarship, accuracy in all matters, straightforwardness, simplicity, devotion to duty and firm adherence to high ideals and moral principles; at the same time he showed patience and forbearance under all conditions and a marked tolerance for the failings of his juniors. For these high qualities of head and heart, he commanded the ready obedience of one and all, as a result of which the Ramakrishna Math and Mission displayed remarkable vigour for growth and expansion during the period of his General-Secretaryship.

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No less noteworthy were his literary achievements. He edited or translated many valuable books of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, such as the *Cultural Heritage of India* (the first three volumes), *The Great Women of India* (Holy Mother Centenary volume), *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (published by Madras Math), the *History of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.*

He also translated a good number of standard works in Sanskrit into English : *Vivekachudamani, Vedanta Paribhasha, Bhasha Pariccheda, Mimamsa Paribhasha, Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, The Last Message of Sri Krishna.* He wrote *A Bengali Grammar at a Glance* and *A Hindi Grammar at a Glance.* The English translation of the Sanskrit commentary of Sri Sankaracharya on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* was his *magnum opus.* It will not be too much to say that no publication of the Mission — in English, Bengali, Sanskrit or Hindi — was brought out without either being edited by or passed through him. As the President of the Advaita Ashrama he published and conducted a monthly magazine in Hindi, called *Samanvaya*, in which effort he had Niralaji, the well-known Hindi poet, as a valuable colleague. Swami Madhavananda took this opportunity to translate into Hindi many works of Swami Vivekananda and the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* with Niralaji's co-operation. An excellent speaker in English and Bengali he has also contributed articles of profound value to the English, Bengali and Hindi magazines of our Order. His letters were always superb.

As the executive head of the vast Organization, and later as its spiritual leader, he travelled far and wide in India and abroad. He visited the U.S.A. thrice, once when he was sent as the head of the Vedanta Centre at San Francisco (1927-29), a second time in 1956 for the dedication of Sri Ramakrishna Temple at Santa Barbara (California) and a third time for reasons of health. During the first two visits, particularly the second one, he visited most of the centres in U.S.A. as also the London and Gretz (France) centres. During these visits in India and abroad he instructed his subordinates, inspected their works, inspired them and gave them guidance for a better life. As a spiritual head, he had also a large number of lay devotees.

The Swami had been ailing for a long time, and a month ago he was hospitalised at the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan, Calcutta. But the best medical help and care proved futile, and he passed into eternal rest on Wednesday, the 6th October, 1965 at 6-50 p.m.

He was a friend, philosopher and guide not only to the monastic members but also to many lay devotees as well. In his passing away the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, as also the world of spirituality, selfless service and scholarship has suffered an irreparable loss and it is sincerely mourned by the members of the Order, the vast number of devotees of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in India and abroad and the public in general.

May his soul rest in peace !

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REMEMBRANCE OF GOD

ONE of the effective ways by which one can obtain release, attain liberation, from the trammels of this world is by the constant practice of the presence of God, say the saints of all religions and of all times. Ordinarily man is aware of the physical world, the world that can be grasped by the five senses : of hearing, touch, seeing, taste, and smell. His estimate of this world in the present age is that it is only a material entity. He does not see it even as God's creation. No doubt he is moved and lured by its constantly changing panorama. The beautiful sunset on a lake or the sea, the wonderful hues and sweep of the rainbow, the cool moonlight on a silent night, each of these, may put him into a rapture. The gentle murmur of a brook and sweet chirping of the birds soothe his nerves and sometimes send him into an ecstasy, as it were. Yet all these may touch only the superficial part in him, that is to say, his senses and to some extent his mind also. He may remember those moments all throughout his life as moments of un-inhibited and inexpressible joy. But they do not enable him to make a deeper dent in his personality if they cannot touch something of the spiritual being in him. Such a person's susceptibility to Nature is only fleeting. The next moment, of such a lofty experience, he may plunge himself into some dastardly act, or perverted action, without any qualms whatsoever, if he does not believe in a higher purpose of life, in a nobler destiny of man, in a Being that lives in all beings and witnesses everything. Nevertheless this influence of Nature is not discounted in spiritual life. In fact Sri Ramakrishna's first ecstasy, which happened when he was a boy of seven, may be said to have been induced by Nature, when a flock of white cranes passed flying across the sombre clouds in the vast expanse of a village sky, unimpeded by skyscrapers and the dust and smoke of industrialized cities.

But, more often than not, man does not strive to look beyond appearances, beyond the phenomenal world. That is why his desserts too are of the world. One cannot reach the Beyond, the Eternal by having recourse to the ephemeral[1] says Yama, the Lord of Death, to Naciketa in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*. It is also the experience of all in this world : as you sow so you reap. What then should one do ? Should he give up everything ? Sri Ramakrishna says to the house-holders that they should give up mentally. He says, 'Hold on to God with both hands when you are not engaged in your duties. And do even your duties with one hand still holding on to His lotus feet'. And those aspirants who are not encumbered are asked to give up not only mentally but outwardly also. What happens to a man who clings to his possessions and relations is graphically described by Sri Ramakrishna : 'Even on his deathbed a person attached to his wealth, asks those around him to lower the wick of the lamp and not to waste the oil so much'.

People speak of giving up everything at the end of their life, as if it is so easy as casting off one's worn out clothes. Attachments to things grow gradually into one's skin, as it were, nay they go even deeper, they penetrate into the very marrow of one's bones, it involves one's whole being. And to think of giving up these attractions and possessions at the evening of one's life will be like having one's bones broken or breath stifled. Even when in full vigour of youth and life our thoughts revolve round our treasure chest. Is it then possible to give up that clinging when old and infirm ? Let the youth not delude itself by thinking that they can devote the fag end of their life to God. We must heed the wise ones who exhort : 'Apply yourself diligently

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[1] न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत् ।
Kathopanisad, 2. 10.

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to what is auspicious, for truly, who knows when death will snatch us away'.[2]

There can be no two opinions about the duration of life. Even a hundred and twenty years, which is perhaps the limit that a man can live healthily, is quite insufficient to fulfil all ambitions and desires in this world. That life is short, is conceded even by agnostics and atheists. It is left to man to make proper use of his life, to get beyond transmigration, to stand away from the wheel of *samsāra*. Again, if we believe in the scriptures, which are authorities in respect of all that is beyond the human ken, we have to accept that those whose actions are more akin to those of the beasts in this life are likely to take the birth of beasts in the next birth. 'By good deeds one goes to higher births and by wicked deeds to lower births and by a mixture of these one attains human birth',[3] says the *Praśna Upaniṣad*. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* asserts that 'persons with meritorious deeds to their credit are born as Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, or Vaishyas, (i.e. men of pious temperament) and those who are of wicked deeds are born as animals such as dogs, pigs and the like. But those who do not fall under either of these two categories tread the third path, of short-lived duration, such as insects and worms, again and again'.[4]

It is also reasonable to assume that whatever one constantly thinks of, that one becomes. If there are some desires in man which cannot be satisfied in man's body, it is but natural that a suitable body will have to be projected, after the dissolution of the human body, to enjoy those desires. Sri Krishna categorically declares, 'By dwelling on whatever thought one leaves the body to that form alone one goes, because of his constant contemplation on that form'.[5] This is the reason why Śri Śankara in the beginning of the *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi* extols human birth so highly: 'Rare is this human birth; rarer it is to be born as a man; much more rare it is to be born with good tendencies; still more rare is the inclination towards the right conduct enunciated by the Vedas and higher than this is the erudition in the scriptures; higher than these are the faculty to discriminate between the Self and the non-Self, the experience of Brahman and continuing to be established in It. (And that is liberation.) This Liberation is not to be obtained except through the well-earned merits of a hundred crore of births'.[6]

Having been born into this imperfect world, we have to somehow get rid of the limitations placed on us on every side and in every way. And overcoming these limitations once and for all time is termed *mukti*, liberation.

From the foregoing discussion we have come to know how it is that we become bound. But in it is also the way out. If we become entangled and enmeshed by thinking of ephemeral things it naturally follows that by contemplating on the Divine, on the Supreme, on the eternally pure, on the eternally conscious, on the eternally free Being we also imbibe all these qualities in some measure until at last the lure of the phenomena fades away into the background and we begin to see that all-pervading Being everywhere.

No doubt, it is difficult to reach the goal, but on that account one should not totally neglect the path. Sri Krishna says that even

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[2] शुभस्य शीघ्रं कोहि जानाति कस्याद्य मृत्युकालो भविष्यति ।

[3] पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति पापेन पापमुभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम् । Pr. Up. 3. 7.

[4] तद्य इह रमणीयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते रमणीयां योनिमापद्येरन् ब्राह्मणयोनिं वा क्षत्रिययोनिं वा वैश्ययोनिं वाथ य इह कपूयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते कपूयां योनिमपद्येरञ्श्वयोनिं वा सूकरयोनिं वा । अथैतयोः पथोर्न कतरेणचन तानीमानि क्षुद्राण्यसकृदावर्तीनि भूतानि भवन्ति जायस्व म्रियस्वेत्येतत्तृतीयं स्थानं । *Chandogya Up.*, V. x. 7-8.

[5] यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ।
Gita, 8. 6.

[6] *Vivekachudamani* 2.

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a little act of righteousness saves one from a great catastrophe.[7] Everyone in this world is not endowed with equal gifts of health, strength and intellect. So each one can start in his humble way to tread the path and the easiest of all ways is the remembrance of God.

How to do it? We, every moment of our life, are doing something, imagining something or planning something. Not a moment is it possible for us to live without activity, either mental or physical. Even the laziest man will be actively dreaming of some great fortune. Inactivity is an impossibility in this world, except for a very few, whose number can be counted on the fingers' ends. 'Your very existence will be in jeopardy if you do not work',[8] says Sri Krishna to Arjuna. Work, therefore, cannot be an excuse not to think of God. 'Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever sacrifice you make, whatever gift you give, whatever austerities you perform, O son of Kunti, offer all that unto Me',[9] stresses Sri Krishna. When you begin a work you invoke His blessings and when it ends you offer it to Him. You hanker for no results. The results are also dedicated to Him. Thus you become free from the fruits of your action. Work and its result has no more power to bind you. You have nothing to gain and nothing to lose. You are only His instrument. This attitude is most beneficial. It subdues, and if this submission is constantly practised, it even annihilates the ego.

It is not possible to remember God always if we contemplate on Him just for the sake of seeking some benefits and forget him totally afterwards. In every act and thought He must be remembered. Even what we eat is to be offered to Him. That is the time when people are apt to forget God either attracted by the savour of the food or due to other circumstances. A poet sang, 'Consider what you eat as an oblation unto the Divine Mother'. That is the attitude we have to try to cultivate. The Lord says in the Gita, 'As Vaiśvānara (the stomach-fire) I live in the bodies of beings'.[10] Here is a suggestion for our contemplation: that what we eat can be considered as an oblation unto Him.

'When you are lying down think that you are prostrating before the Lord.' When you are giving gifts think that you are offering them to God. Does He not live in all beings? This world is His creation and everything in it should remind us of Him; instead we are enamoured and caught in its glamour and forget its Creator. It is there that we miss the grip over our mind. The mind tries to take us away from our real being, away from God. Why does it do that? Because, says the Upaniṣad, it was created with a tendency to go outward, along with the senses.[11] The senses present the mind with so many charming things and if it is not well controlled by the discriminative faculty it falls a prey to those rosy pictures and inevitably forgets God.

We make pilgrimages, make sacrifices with an ulterior motive: to obtain progeny, to enjoy the pleasures of heaven or obtain name and fame here on this earth. Well, what does all these come to? None of them, work or progeny or wealth, can set you on the path of liberation. Only by renouncing all these can man attain it.[12]

Man, given as he is to live in the world, cannot all of a sudden obtain perfection in any method of approach to God. He must strive and struggle. There should be no letting up of efforts. It is like swimming against the

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[7] स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात ।
Gita, 2. 40.

[8] शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ।
Ibid., 3. 8.

[9] यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥
Ibid., 9. 27.

[10] अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
Ibid., 15. 14.

[11] पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभूस्तस्मात्पराङ् पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् । *Kathopanisad*, 4. 1.

[12] न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैकेऽमृतत्वमानशुः ॥
Kaivalyopanisad, 1. 3.

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current, the moment you cease your efforts you are carried down a mile or more before you are able to understand it or recover your breath. Sri Ramakrishna gives the example of a boatman to illustrate how one must struggle to see God. As long as the boat is in the winding alleys of the stream and the wind is against him, he rows and is alert, and he steers clear of the sandbanks and hidden rocks, but once he gains the main current he can leave the rowing, unfurl his sail to the favourable wind and enjoy a smoke. The main current means to be fully imbued with the thought of God, the favourable wind is God's grace. When these two things are combined nothing can disturb the devotee. He can be sure of reaching the goal.

Sri Ramakrishna in this connection cites another example : of a goldsmith at his task of melting gold. The goldsmith uses the bellows, the pipe and the fan to generate the proper heat to make the gold melt, but once he accomplishes his task, he sits back and enjoys rest as long as he needs it.

Patanjali says that one's progress in spiritual life is proportionate to the struggle that one makes. Sri Ramakrishna says that nothing can be achieved by those who say that everything will happen in time and do no practice at all.

A doubt may arise here : Men have practised long and arduously before having a glimpse of God. Is it then possible to see God by merely practising His presence or remembering Him constantly? Well, there have been saints who attained that state merely through the remembrance of God But their remembrance was genuine. To use an expression of Sri Ramakrishna, there was 'no theft in the chamber of their heart'. They gave themselves up wholly, without any reservation, to Him.

Remembrance of God may appear as an insignificant practice, worth not the trouble. But if we think a little deeper we will come to know that it is not so easy as it appears to be. Engaged in the duties of the world man forgets God completely. And even if he takes His name, the lips only might move, but the heart would not be touched. Its adoration will be somewhere else. Sri Ramakrishna used to tell a story to illustrate this point : Once Narada, who was proud of being a great devotee of the Lord, went to Vaikuntha (the abode of Narayana). The Lord coming to know of Narada's thought said, 'Narada, go to such and such a place. A great devotee of mine lives there. Cultivate his acquaintance ; for he is truly devoted to Me'. Narada went there and found a farmer who rose early in the morning, pronounced the name of Hari (God) only once, and taking his plough, went out and tilled the ground all day long. At night he went to bed after pronouncing the name of Hari once more. Narada said to himself : 'How can this rustic be a lover of God? I see him busily engaged in worldly duties, and he has no signs of a pious man about him'. He went back to the Lord and spoke what he thought of his new acquaintance. Thereupon the Lord said : 'Narada, take this cup of oil and go round this city and come back with it. But take care that you do not spill even a single drop of it'. Narada did as he was told, and on his return the Lord asked him, 'Well, how many times did you remember Me in the course of your walk round the city?' 'Not once, my Lord' said Narada 'and how could I, when I had to watch this cup brimming over with oil?' The Lord then said : 'This one cup of oil did so divert your attention that even *you* did forget Me altogether. But look at that rustic, who, though carrying the heavy burden of a family, still remembers Me twice every day'. Our devotion is not judged by what we profess but by the way we live. The Lord looks into the heart of the devotee and does not judge merely by what he outwardly does. If there is no consonance between the inside and out, the practices one does cannot yield the desired results. Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth should speak and out of the fullness of the heart also the hands should act. True remembrance

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makes a god of man. His very proximity makes those near him feel the presence of the Most High. Such remembrance, however, comes after a long period of *sādhana* and is born out of the true love of God. Nevertheless this method is open to all, the high and the low, the poor and the rich. Let us practise it and be blessed.

PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

अवकाशात्मकं तच्चेदसदिति चिन्त्यताम्। भिन्नं सतोऽसच्च नेति वक्षि चेद् व्याहतिस्तव ॥ ६९॥

Tat, ākāśa separate from Brahman; *avakāśātmakaṁ cet,* if is of the nature of space; *tat,* that (*ākāśa*); *asaditi,* as unreal; *cintyatāṁ,* know; *sataḥ,* from Reality; *bhinnaṁ,* separate; *asat ca na,* but not unreal; *iti,* in this manner; *vakṣi cet,* if you say; *tava,* for you; *vyāhati,* error of contradiction; (*sambhavet,* will occur).

Doubt: If *ākāśa* is separate from Reality and is of the nature of space why can its existence not be separately declared? That is being answered here.

69. If it is posited that *ākāśa* is separate from Brahman and that it is of the nature of space, then know it to be unreal. However, if you assert that *ākāśa* is separate from Reality but not *unreal* then to you will attach the fault of speaking in contradictory terms.

Doubt: *Ākāśa* is perceived. If it is unreal how can it be perceived? That is being answered in the following verse.

भातीति चेद्भातु नाम भूषणं मायिकस्य तत्। यदसद्भासमानं तन्मिथ्या स्वप्नगजादिवत् ॥ ७० ॥

Bhāti iti cet, if it is said that the thing appears to be existing; *bhātu nāma,* let it be so; *māyikasya,* of the effect of Māyā; *tat,* that, (appearance); *bhūṣaṇaṁ,* is an ornament; *yat,* whatever object; *asat,* is unreal; *bhāsamānaṁ,* though appears; *tat,* that; *svapna gajādivat,* like the dream-elephant; *mithyā,* is an illusion.

70. If it is said that *ākāśa* even after being separated from Reality appears to exist, the reply is let it appear.[1] That appearance is an ornament to the effect of Māyā. Further, whatever object is unreal, though it appears to exist, is illusory[2] like the dream-elephant.

[1] The appearance of a thing that has no real existence does not go against the Vedantic concept that it is unreal. On the other hand it strengthens its (the Vedantic) conception that it is only the effect of Māyā and is illusory.

[2] An illusory object is one that is different from both existence and non-existence. A snake seen in the rope is an example of such illusion.

Doubt: How can you differentiate between two things which are always to be found together? The next verse answers this doubt.

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ON THE PEACE INVOCATIONS OF THE VEDAS

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

ॐ वाङ्मे मनसि प्रतिष्ठिता मनो मे वाचि प्रतिष्ठित-माविराविर्म एधि वेदस्य म आणीस्थः श्रुतं मे मा प्रहासी-रनेनाधीतेनाहोरात्रान्त्सन्दधामि ऋतं वदिष्यामि सत्यं वदिष्यामि तन्मामवतु तद्वक्तारमवतु अवतु मां अवतु वक्तारम् । ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

KNOWLEDGE can be imparted and assimilated only in an atmosphere of peace and security. Therefore the Vedic study commences with a peace invocation in order to secure this necessary condition. Though this chant is pronounced by the disciple, it is meant for the preceptor as well. The four Vedas to which all the Upaniṣads are but parts have their respective peace invocations. The *mantra* we have recited now is chanted before the study of Rig Vedic Upaniṣads.

May my speech be firmly fixed in my mind. May my mind be unswervingly directed towards my speech. O, wisdom ! contained in the Vedas, reveal thyself more and more in me. O, thought and speech, you usher into me the knowledge of the Vedas. May not the revealed knowledge depart from me. Day and night continually let me engage myself in the study of the Veda and I shall declare the right thought therein ; I shall declare the Truth revealed by the Vedas. May the Truth protect me ; May the Truth protect the Preceptor. Let there be peace in our mind and body and world around.

According to the Vedic seers speech starts from the mind, speech is again conceived as *laukīkī* and *vaidīkī ;* the former denoting the discourses of this world and the latter denoting Divine Knowledge or spiritual wisdom beginning with intellectual understanding and ending in Realization. In this Mantra, the term *vāk* refers to the religious lore of the Vedas. A student of Vedic knowledge is enjoined to think and express in perfect harmony. His mind must be in complete unison with the speech and his speech must be absolutely sincere to his mind. Again the Mantra embodies a prayer to the Supreme Spirit for revealing Himself more and more in the aspirant. Through Divine grace alone complete realization of the Truth taught in the Vedas is accomplished. Mind and speech are here spoken of as the ushers (āṇī) of Veda or God-knowledge. It was the greatest concern of the Vedic student that knowledge once gained should never slip away from the mind. Not only they prayed for it but also took the strong resolve to live continually, day and night, in remembrance of what they had learnt. In the Vedas, *Ṛtaṁ* and *satyaṁ* are two pregnant terms denoting the attributes of the Divine Reality. The first term *Ṛtaṁ* translated as 'Right' denotes the unerring laws that govern the universe and the moral principles that rule in the heart of man. The second term *satyaṁ* denotes God as existence. The aspirant after Divine Knowledge engaged in the study of the Vedas declares that his words will be employed in proclaiming to the world the glory of Truth. The Mantra concludes with the longing expressed for divine protection. Only when the teacher is strengthened with the necessary competence, enthusiasm and selfless application, and the disciple is vouchsafed with the clear intelligence capable of comprehending, recalling and assimilating the knowledge imparted, success in their endeavour is possible. Hence the appropriateness of the last wish. The term peace is repeated three times implying the need of security, for study, in body, mind and environments where learning is conducted.

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ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

This Mantra occurs as the first verse of the 5th chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and is repeated as the peace chant while commencing the study of the Upaniṣads belonging to the Yajurveda of one particular recension, (called *Śukla Yajurveda*). According to Śri Śankaracharya, this verse contains an epitome of the essential teachings of the Vedas. The verse may be freely rendered into English as follows : Para Brahman or the Divine Reality transcending the phenomenal world is in itself complete and full. This world is also full because it is filled by that Reality. When the seeker of Truth realizes that Transcendent Reality through this phenomenal reality, as its substance and background, he establishes himself in that all comprehensive Truth, which is the all in all of this world and what is beyond it.

From this paraphrase we can see that four points are made clear in the verse.

1. The Divine Reality which is the goal of the seeker of liberation is beyond the world of *samsāra* and that it remains for ever full and complete without being in anyway limited or tainted by the world. Such a Reality alone constitutes Mokṣa or liberation. It is ever perfect, eternal and is of the nature of Intelligence and Bliss. When one realizes It, one is liberated from *samsāra,* without the possibility of ever returning to *samsāra* again. If the Supreme Reality is conceived partly phenomenal and partly transcendental there is no security for the liberated soul who has become or who has discovered his identity with such a Reality. Hence the primary doctrine of Advaita Vedanta is that the Highest Truth is perfect in itself and absolutely free from any association with the changing universe. The Mantra here sets out reality of this description to be the Highest Truth which is identified with Mokṣa, or the goal of every transmigrating soul.

2. In the second word the Mantra declares that this world is also *pūrṇa* or complete. Superficially it is a paradox to assert two realities full and perfect. The world is not complete or perfect either as an infinite reality or as the highest of values to be sought by a religious seeker. So, Śri Śankaracharya points out here that the world is real and complete because the same transcendent Divine reality permeates and sustains the phenomenal world as its core. The world has no existence apart from the background of the Divine Reality. Just as a toy elephant made of wood is not apart from the source out of which it is made, so also world is not apart from its Divine Background. It follows therefore that this world also is *pūrṇa* or full, because its reality is the same *niṣprapañca brahman* (Transcendental Reality).

3. In the third word we are told of the method of *sādhana* or practice required for the realization of the Supreme Truth. Here the first term *pūrṇāt* refers to the phenomenal world as we see and the second *pūrṇa* refers to the Divine as its background. It is then stated that the Divine is distinguished and worshipped in the phenomenal world. The passive verb *udaccaté* is from the root which gives the sense of separating as well as valuing and worshipping. The scripture is for the purpose of showing the way to one who is bound by *samsāra*. The bound soul has to see in the world an occasion to get a glimpse of the Divine. Therefore he has to see the perfect in the imperfect world, the perfect Reality of which it is an appearance and pursue the Reality in and through the world till he attains to this goal.

4. The last line states that when a person attains to realization of the Truth, he knows and remains as the perfect whole. This is the description of Jñāna. Jñāna can arise only when ignorance is dispelled. Ignorance consists of understanding Brahman and the world as two opposite realities. As long as a man is engrossed with and sees only the world, he knows not Brahman. When he realizes Brah-

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man, he sees Brahman alone, not the world. Therefore it is stressed that when the seeker of liberation is illumined he grasps Brahman and rejects the world and remains as Brahman.

The four points hinted by this *mantra* thus bring home to us the outstanding principles of Advaita Vedanta.

ॐ सहनाववतु सहनौ भुनक्तु सहवीर्यं करवावहै
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॐ शान्तिः
शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

This is the Śanti Mantra recited at the beginning of the study of the Upaniṣads in the Krishna Yajurveda and it appears as a part of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. This again is a prayer expressing the conditions necessary for an effective study of the subject on hand. The prayer is pronounced by the disciple on behalf of himself and the preceptor : 'May Brahman, taught in the Vedas, protect us (the preceptor and the disciple) together by granting us knowledge. May we engage ourselves in the pursuit of imparting and receiving knowledge with continued energy. May the learning acquired be efficient and fruitful. May not the disciple's inability to grasp, inadvertance or incorrect procedure bring about hostility between the disciple and the preceptor ; may we not be hostile to any one '.

The Mantra besides invoking the favour of God for rendering the process of learning effective through energetic, active and efficient study in an atmosphere of Divine protection and peace, stresses also the need of mutual love and freedom from all feelings of hatred or dislike towards anyone. Knowledge can be communicated and assimilated only in an atmosphere of love.

ॐ आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक्प्राणश्चक्षु श्रोत्रमथो
बलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि सर्वं ब्रह्मोपनिषदं माहं
ब्रह्म निराकुर्यां मा मा ब्रह्म निराकरोत् अनिराकरणमस्तु
अनिराकरणं मेऽस्तु तदात्मनि निरते य उपनिषत्सु
धर्माः ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Let my limbs wax strong. Let my speech, my breath, my eyes, my ears and all my senses become powerful. All is Brahman taught in the Upaniṣads. May I not deny that Brahman. May not Brahman deny me. Emphatically may I never doubt or reject Brahman. Those principles and those laws taught in the Upaniṣads, ever devoted to Ātman, may those truths be present in me and ever remain in me.

This Mantra is the peace chant repeated before the study of the Sāmaveda Upaniṣads. The first condition required in respect of a student is a healthy body, unflagging energy, senses that suffer no defect and strength born of self-confidence. Secondly, an aspirant after spiritual Truth has to start with an active faith in the reality of his quest. Truths that are beyond the experience of the senses cannot be demonstrated at the outset. That all is Brahman is an axiom that has to be accepted first on the statement of Śruti alone. That the central subject matter of all the Vedas is Ātman or Brahman is again a declaration of the Śruti itself. On the acceptance of these two teachings depend the illumination and realization spoken about in Vedanta. He who denies this has nothing to do with religion and spirituality. Therefore it is the constant wish and heartfelt prayer of the student engaged in Vedic study and practice that he may not at any time become an agnostic and deny God or Brahman. According to the doctrine of Bhakti hinted in the Veda, this is also evident that knowledge of God can arise only through His grace. That is to say God or Brahman should not deny Himself to the devotee. This doctrine is of such great importance that the Mantra repeats the statement twice in order to emphasize it. The Mantra concludes with the entreaty of the aspirant to enable him to possess within himself the qualities and virtues that are taught in the Upaniṣads and which are essential for the attainment of his goal. We can find from this that the Upaniṣads are not meant to be learnt merely as a part of literary education, but as a guiding authority

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for the practice and accomplishment of spiritual and ethical conduct and realization.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयामदेवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः व्यशेमदेवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो
बृहस्पतिर्दधातु । ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
ॐ नमो ब्रह्मादिभ्यो ब्रह्मविद्यासंप्रदाय कर्तृभ्यो वंश
ऋषिभ्यो महद्भ्यो नमो गुरुभ्यः ॥

These two Mantras are originally found in the Rig Veda Samhita 1st Mandala 89th Sukta and are repeated as Śanti Mantras before the study of the Atharva Veda Upaniṣads. They are in the form of supplications addressed to various Vedic Gods. Originally these Mantras along with some others, which occur in the Ṛg Vedic context, were recited at the completion of a *yajña* by the performer of the *yajña* standing in the *yajña vedi*. The sense of the Mantra is this : Oh ! Devas, may we listen to what is auspicious and good ; may we have the strength and capacity to worship you and also may our eyes perceive what is auspicious and beneficial. May we, who sing your praise and pray, live our allotted span of life in perfect health and strength.

May Indra extolled in the Vedas, Pūṣan who knows all, Tārkṣya who saves us from all harm and Bṛhaspati, who protects our spiritual lustre give us progress in the study of the scriptures and practice of the truth taught therein. We offer our salutation to the propounders of the lineage of Brahmavidya, by way of succession from preceptor to disciple beginning with Brahma and also to the great Rishis who have established Vidya Vamsa or the lineage of teaching and learning the Vedic lore and also to the great Gurus who have handed down from generation to generation the knowledge of the Vedas.

The first Mantra refers to the aspirant's wish to see and hear only what is good and auspicious. In a mixed world the seeker of spirituality must resolve himself and pray for listening to what is beneficial and seeing what is good. The senses are the gateways of the mind and they are to be guarded properly by refusing admission for evil speech and sight. The next point to be noted : The span of one's life on earth was believed to depend upon the grace of God. Life being a divine gift is best used in the worship and service of God. These can be discharged with efficiency and satisfaction when there is the necessary strength and hence the seers of the Vedas were never tired of praying for strength. Weakness is the contrary of virtue and right strength alone makes life worthwhile. The second Mantra is addressed to Indra, Pūṣan, Tārkṣya and Bṛhaspati who were the various Vedic Gods. These names however, need not be taken to imply a plurality of Gods. They are personifications of the different powers and attributes of the Divine reality conceived differently by the devotees for the purpose of worship and supplication of their individual needs. Thus, Indra is the regent of strength, *Pūṣan* of knowledge, *Tārkṣya* of protection from harm and Bṛhaspati of religious wisdom. When the welfare of the seeker is secured, he makes progress in his religious path. The last passage is a salutation to all ancient teachers and preceptors through whom knowledge devolves on successive generations of disciples. This is repeated as a remembrance of one's reverence, gratitude and humility towards the source of knowledge beginning from Brahmā, the first teacher, down to the last one in the link, namely one's own preceptor, without which knowledge cannot dawn or continue in its efficacy.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

On another occasion Lātu Maharaj spoke at Banaras on the same subject: 'First of all build your own character. Attracted by your character let people come to you. Then start preaching. Now, your own interest is forcing you to preach. So they would not accept your words, which, as they know, are prompted by self-interest. But when they would know that you have no axe of your own to grind, that it is purely for their good that you are speaking, they will accept and follow you. Then your preaching will be really beneficent. Master used to say, "If you light a lamp you are not to send an invitation to moths; they come of themselves. The load-stone does not send a formal invitation to pieces of iron — it is not needed. They come running of themselves. It is like that"'.

Lātu Maharaj spent, at a stretch, five or six months at Haramohanbabu's house and then, all of a sudden he appeared at Ramababu's house and saw mother (Ramababu's wife) suffering from fatal illness. He stayed there for a month and a half. Ramababu's second daughter said, 'Lātuda served mother as devotedly as he had served father. With Swami Yogavinode, he served mother the whole night without a wink of sleep and would send us away to other rooms, saying, "Go, take rest; if you wake up the whole night you will yourselves fall sick. Who will then serve mother and you together?" . . . After mother's death he would come to our house very rarely. And we five of us went away to five different places. After mother's death he set the *mynā* bird free'.

Round this *mynā* there is a story. Once, during Ramababu's lifetime this bird flew away. Brother Lātu did not know of this incident. One day while he was passing through Kansaripara the bird cried out from a verandah, 'Brother Lātu, O brother Lātu'. From this call Lātu Maharaj understood that the bird must have flown away from Ramababu's house. Lātu Maharaj tried to argue with the owner of that house that the bird was theirs. But the gentleman would not hear. When he brought the matter to Ramababu the latter came there and re-purchased the bird for Rupees five.

About 1903 Lātu Maharaj returned to Balarambabu's house. Spending a few months there he came to Puri along with Dr Saśibhushan Ghose's nephew Nanibabu to witness the Swing festival (Jhulan) of Sri Krishna. There he stayed, this time, for a month.

After the Durga Puja of 1903 Lātu Maharaj again went on a pilgrimage. This time he had as his companions Nivarana Datta, Nandalal Brahmachari, Purna Chandra Mukhopadhyay (Patalbabu) and Rajkumar Banerjee. The last two gentlemen bore all his expenses. This time they visited Kaśi, Prayag, Mathura, Vrindavana, etc. By the first week of December they returned to Calcutta. Once when he saw a Brahmachari of the Mission giving way to anger he said, 'You are a Brahmachari, my boy; you should not be angry. You have taken the vow of Brahmacharya, which is meant for controlling, lust, anger and greed. And you are giving free vent to anger and cursing others. That is very bad. You are, instead of wishing well to all, cursing people! He who does not invoke blessings for all can never succeed in spiritual life'.

Returning from Vrindavana at the end of 1903 Lātu Maharaj came to Balarambabu's

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house and stayed there without a break for about nine years. In October, 1912 he went to Kaśi. In these nine years he suffered from slight illness three times. Once he suffered from serious insomnia. During this illness Girishbabu beguiled him with stories. Lātu Maharaj himself said, 'When for four or five days I had no sleep I would repair to Girishbabu's house to hear stories. In the course of the recital of the stories I would fall asleep. Then Girishbabu would go out for a walk'.

In 1906-7 he had a severe attack of rheumatism. During that time he used to take bitter gourd and juice of two or three lemons. His co-disciples used to cut jokes about his taking bitter gourd. It is current in Bengal that bitter gourd produces cataract. Who knows if the saying has any grain of truth in it, for Lātu Maharaj actually developed cataract. In 1909-10 both the eyes of Lātu Maharaj were operated upon one after another. Raja Maharaj took special care of Lātu Maharaj during these days.

In 1903 a compositor of the Basumati Press named Prakash had the good fortune of serving him devotedly. Everyday, both morning and evening, this young man used to prepare his food — tea, boiled gram, burnt potato, boiled bitter gourd, etc. Later this duty devolved on Paśupati, another young man. It is this latter young man who served Lātu Maharaj at Kaśi untiringly till his last days.

CHAPTER XIX

We have mentioned before that Lātu Maharaj lived at Balarambabu's house for nine years without a break. How he spent his time, what contacts he had during this time, etc. have been recorded by Biharibabu in brief. 'Scriptures have it that monks should live in solitude and avoid company. Whether we live in the Himalayas or in crowded Calcutta depends on our own minds. If breathing the Himalayan air we go on dwelling in our minds on our families and friends, on the pleasant familiar household scenes we are surely not enjoying the Himalayan solitude. If we go to Varanasi and keep our minds on our children in Calcutta we are not on a pilgrimage to Varanasi, on the other hand we are living in Calcutta itself. Staying in this crowded city of Calcutta Lātu Maharaj was really living in the Himalayas. What would you call it otherwise than living in solitude — sitting alone on the bank of the Ganges at Go-ghat (near Kashi Mitra's ghat), or on a bench in the Beadon garden quite absent-minded, or on a packing case in the *Basumati* Press absorbed in meditation, while others around him were revelling and rioting? And these, not for days or months but years! But why did he prefer to be in Calcutta at all? It is because Calcutta is within the scriptural five-mile radius of the temple of Dakshineswar, the dwelling place of his Guru, the Paramahamsa. Why did Lātu Maharaj use to call it the "sacred five-mile area" is borne out by his description of the Dakshineswar temple: "There live Mother Kali, Vishnu, the twelve Śivas and Mother Ganges. And he, our Master — how many years did he perform hard austere spiritual practices there; how many all-renouncing monks and saints spent their days in spiritual practices, forgetting the world; how many devotees mingled their tears of agonizing separation from the Lord with the sacred waters of the Ganges! What would you call such a place but one of pilgrimage?" What wonder is there that a man who looks upon Dakshineswar with such an eye would spend his years there as devotees do in Varanasi, Gaya, or Ayodhya, in meditation, prayer, counting beads, in the company of holy persons and in holy converse?'

When he was at Balarambabu's residence most of the time he was alone. Only for some little time in the morning and evening he would allow just a few devotees to come in, and he would spend the time in sacred talks and discussions. And during such times he appeared

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to be a different person, eloquent and enthusiastic, allowing little opportunity to others to speak. But on days he would like to be quiet, all importunities and persuasions would be vain to draw him out. People who saw him during such times would come out with the idea that he (Lātu Maharaj) was too dull and grave a personality; but those who had the good fortune of meeting him on other occasions would say they never met a man so kind and sympathetic, open-hearted and generous as he. But what was required was to pierce through his armour of gravity, once that was done they were sure to be fed to satisfaction with 'the milk of human kindness' — his love and mercy flowed in torrents.

Brahmachari Nandalal one day came to him and said, 'Maharaj, a great soul like you should not keep such company'. Pop came the retort, 'Who is the rogue whom you call the "great soul"? You rogues are all flatterers. Who is your "great soul" here? It is still a far-off cry for me. Do you know, you vagrant, who is called a great soul?' The Brahmachari smiled and said, 'Yes, Maharaj, I know. He is indeed a great soul who is a friend of the poor'. Lātu Maharaj asked in the same rough tone, 'Who can become a friend of the poor? The Lord alone is their friend. Nobody else can ever be. He alone really understands their difficulties'. The Brahmachari was insistent, he said: 'No, Maharaj, there are others also — *sadhus* and devotees of the Lord also understand it, for example, Swamiji, Sri Ramakrishna, Buddha, Jesus' and then smilingly looking at Lātu Maharaj, 'even you, Maharaj'.

Lātu Maharaj: 'Get out, you rogue. Come here to flatter me?'

When that day the friendly-quarrel ended, Lātu Maharaj came out with the following. 'You know none but one who is himself poor can love the poor truly. It is impossible for one who regards himself rich to love the poor. One has first to go through the depressing conditions of poverty to enter into the hearts of the poor people. It is for this reason that brother Vivekananda told brother Hari: "Look here, brother, after taking *sannyasa* I do not know if I have really gained anything. But one thing is certain (then showing his heart) this has expanded enormously". But one who is rich himself can enter into the hearts of the poor if the grace of the Lord is there on him; and in that case he has also understood what poverty really is. It is this which forces, him, so to say, to spend money for them. The Lord tests people with money. It is easy to pass tests devised by men; but divine tests are very hard. You can cheat man. But you can do neither with God; you can neither pass His tests nor cheat Him; to pass His tests is very difficult for the rich. For example you do come across people who are very rich, but the Lord's Maya has covered their hearts with such a thick coating of selfishness that throughout their long life they do not feel the urge for any kind of charity. Again you see people who are quite ready to give to the poor, to help them, but they have no money. Blessed indeed are they who are rich and feel for the poor, to help them. Know, there is Lord's grace on such people. It is indeed a rare phenomenon. You know it well that riches increases man's vanity. And the more vain a man the farther away he is from the Lord; and the farther away, one is from God the more pitiable is his condition. Never measure a man's poverty by the wealth he possesses; the real measure is to know how far off he is from God. Nearer the Lord, richer the man; more forgetful of Him poorer and unhappier is he.'

The author,* who was attentively hearing to the above, said: 'Maharaj, to be rich or poor being in the proximity of or at a distance from the Lord is all right, and to disregard the worth of wealth is very easy to say; but those who have to carry the heavy burden of maintaining a big family can't do without money. We who suffer on this count feel every day that it is money alone that matters, that it is

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the source of all our weal and lack of it, of all our woes. Our experience is, a family that has no money has neither peace nor happiness, it has only a burden of miseries on its shoulders, it is more dead than alive ; and a family that has money to go by has everything, enjoyment, peace and contentment, righteousness, and even an assured heaven '.

In answer to this Lātu Maharaj said, ' What you say, my boy, is apparently so. Had your presumption been true all the rich men in Calcutta would have secured righteousness, happiness, peace and everything good, at least they would have enjoyed a little contentment. But tell me yourself if their discontent and unhappiness is not greater than that of the poor. Yes, it is true, money brings houses, land and property, servants and assistants, women and the attendent pleasures ; but not peace and contentment and righteousness which are altogether different from all the other things mentioned above. These three are not extraneous things or possessions. These belong to a different plane. They are of the heart and mind, internal. No amount of external possessions can ever remove or lessen that internal want or deficiency. There the Lord comes in, it is He alone who can do away with this innate sense of poverty. It is for this reason that we are forced to admit that there is an inviolate connexion between the Lord and these three, whether in our spiritual blindness we see it or not '.

Another day a devotee said in a tone of complaint : ' Maharaj, whatever you get by begging you spend on us and don't keep anything for yourself. It is our duty to give to saints and monks, we are doing just the reverse. Not only that, we are positively incurring sin by partaking of that which people give to saints and monks. Do stop involving us in this kind of sin '.

Lātu Maharaj : ' Come out with your suggestion, my boy.'

The devotee : 'Please cease going for alms, this is our earnest request.'

Lātu Maharaj : ' Do you not know, it is a monk's *dharma* to go for alms ? Why are you preventing me from following my *dharma* ? '

The devotee : ' We feel it so sore, Maharaj.'

Lātu Maharaj : ' Why so, why do you feel it ? '

The devotee : ' You want to know our pain, Maharaj ? (His eyes glistened.) We are grievously pained. The other day you went out to beg and you had to hear very harsh words — and all this only for our sake. This is simply unbearable to us.'

Lātu Maharaj : ' Why ? What happened ? Who used harsh words against me ? '

The devotee : ' Where did you go for alms yesterday, Maharaj ? All those words you had to hear for our sake only. Isn't it ? '

Lātu Maharaj : ' Who told you all these ? '

The devotee : ' We have heard from Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) the whole story. That devil of a shop-keeper abused you right and left. And for our sake you had to swallow all that. Now we have decided among ourselves. We would never allow you to go for alms. We would meet all your expenses from subscriptions raised from ourselves.'

Lātu Maharaj : ' Will that not amount to begging ? ' This remark hit the devotee on the head. Lātu Maharaj noticed it, but continued : ' A Sannyasin has to observe some rules. Will you not allow me to observe them ? Simply because the observance will wound somebody's feelings a Sannyasin will have to desist from it ! What kind of request is this ? '

The devotee : ' To beg alms, Maharaj — is that the only duty of a Sannyasin ? '

Lātu Maharaj : ' No, but it is an important duty of a Sannyasin to depend on the Lord and also to maintain his devotees. And a *Sadhu* does not feel it painful to beg alms to maintain or serve his guru and his devotees.'

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The devotee : 'Maharaj, it seems to me to be very queer that a *sadhu* will have to beg alms for the maintenance of his devotees even by pocketing insults and abuses. And what kind of devotees ? Those who earn money, which, however, may not be sufficient. I can't understand the logic of it.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'He (Master) used to say, a *sadhu* must live on alms and when he goes for begging some will give money ; many, abuses ; but a *sadhu* must accept both. That is his duty.'

The devotee : 'That fellow said so many things to you, and still you calmly begged alms of him ! How did you do it, Maharaj ? '

Lātu Maharaj : 'I told him, "Brother, whatever you have said is all true, I don't question that. We do not have matted locks on our head, nor rosaries of *rudraksha* round our necks, nor do we besmear our bodies with ashes or carry large pairs of tongs in our hands. We cannot cure diseases, read your hands or give amulets to protect you against bad planetary influences. But we never wish ill of anyone, on the contrary we pray for the welfare of all". I said something more "Please remember we never come out for alms depending on charity of people like yourself. If it is our *guru's* wish, we shall have all our wants met. If he does not desire it your hearts will not open for giving charity. You are not the givers, the real giver is He, the Lord." When the shop-keeper heard all this his heart opened and he gave me alms.'

The devotee : (*Excitedly*) 'Whatever it be, Maharaj, we have decided. We are not going to allow you to go for alms. We do not want to hear anything from you. You must yield to our request. You cannot throw away your devotees' earnest request.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'You should not put forth such a request to a Sannyasin. He begs to follow the injunction of the scriptures. One should not stand in his way. I will go by the scriptural injunction.'

The devotee : 'And it is the duty of the devotee to serve *sadhus*. That duty we too are determined to follow.'

At this Lātu Maharaj laughed and said, 'Will you frankly tell me who taught you all this ? '

The devotee : 'One of your *gurubhais*, (co-disciples), Maharaj.' [It was Raja Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda)].

Lātu Maharaj : 'Now I understand, where your force was coming from. I yield. Let his word stand. I will accept your money. Raja has to keep his eyes on so many things. He is to maintain the good name of the Math (Belur Math). So it is his request through you. I must keep his request. Shall I not ?'

Since that day Lātu Maharaj started taking money from the devotees, but never a farthing more than what was needed to meet his primary necessities. He used to say 'A genuine *sadhu* has no pockets in his shirts'. A devotee did not follow it and asked its meaning. Lātu Maharaj said, 'If you have a pocket you will have the tendency to keep something in it, if not a few pence, at least some small chips of betel-nuts. That is prohibited for a Sannyasin '.

(*To be continued*)

We often mistake mere prattle for religious truth, mere intellectual perorations for great spiritual realization, and then comes sectarianism, then comes fight. If we once understand that this realization is the only religion, we shall look into our own hearts and find how far we are towards realizing the truths of religion. Then we shall understand that we ourselves are groping in darkness, and are leading others to grope in the same darkness, then we shall cease from sectarianism, quarrel and fight.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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ĀḶVĀRS AND THEIR SONG-EFFUSIONS

K. SESHADRI

THE very term 'Āḷvār' implies one who dives deep in the ocean of God-experience The Āḷvārs get immersed in Bhagavad-anubhava, and their utterances are fresh with the immediacy of authentic illumination. Their songs are spontaneous outpourings, for their hearts are suffused with love and their minds illumined by a superior, celestial wisdom. Their love is the soul's innate love of God, and their wisdom is the inspired wisdom of divine love, the wisdom that defies logic and delights in Truth. Their devotion is not devoid of Jñāna, but their Jñāna is formed and shaped and rendered real by love.

The songs of Āḷvārs are inspired poetry. They are not deliberate or designed for effect. They carry no trace of common self-consciousness. Indeed, the Āḷvār protests, 'it is not I that sing but God-in-me', and adds 'He sings His own praises, but chooses me as His instrument'. The hymns are no mere praises that propitiate. They instruct and elevate. They speak of the supreme; they are intimations of the Ultimate. There is in them such perfect harmony of sound and sense, such genuine fidelity of the one to the other, that they are rightly called 'Prabandhas' *par-excellence*, 'Divya Prabandhas'. The Nālāyira Divya Prabhanda, which is the Book of the four thousand hymns is a collection of these songs. The largest and most important section of the book consisting nearly of a thousand and three hundred hymns comprises the four works of Nammāḷvār — the *Tiruvirutaṁ*, the *Tiruvāciriyaṁ*, the *Tiruvandādi* and the *Tiruvoymoḷi*.

Nammāḷvār is the central luminary in the galaxy of Āḷvārs. His works are regarded as on a par with the four Vedas, and he himself is hailed as one who has rendered the teachings of the Veda in Tamil ('*Vedam-tamizh — seyda-māran*'). The Prabandhas as a whole, and Nammāḷvār's *Tiruvoymoḷi* in particular, contain the quintessence of a complete philosophy of religion. The *Tiruvoymoḷi* deals with the five main principles (known as the *arthapañcaka*) that constitute the cardinal points in all philosophies of religion. It speaks of the nature of the Supreme (the *Paramātma-svarupa*), the nature of one's own being (*Sva-svarupa*), the means to be adopted for the attainment of the supreme (*upāya*), the obstacles in the way of the highest attainment (*virodhi*), and the final state of consummation (*purushārtha*).

The Supreme is Lord Nārāyana described in the Pāśurams as 'Tiruvinmanāḷan' and 'Enberumān-Nāraṇan'. The individual stands in an organic relation of total dependence to the Supreme Lord, who is the Soul of his soul. He is present everywhere; He pervades all things; He is immanent in the universe as the inner animating principle. 'The Lord is within, for he has made our souls His abode; let us trustfully surrender to Him' — this is Nammāḷvār's great message. Prapatti or total and unreserved surrender at His feet is the only *upāya* or means for the attainment of the Highest. And the only means is provided by no other than the Lord Himself. The obstacles that stand in the way of our adopting the means and attaining the goal are subtle but powerful forms of *ahaṁkāra* and *mamakāra*, narrow notions of 'I' and 'mine'. The Lord's grace alone can help us overcome these. Whether it is a defect of understanding or infirmity of will, the grace of the Lord alone can remove it. When *ahaṁkāra* and *mamakāra* are liquidated, and the finite soul awakens to a life of dedicated surrender, the highest is attained, the *purushārtha* is realized.

The entire philosophy of the thousand Pāśurams of the *Tiruvoymoḷi* is condensed and presented in the opening verse of the Prabandha. Addressing his own mind the Āḷvār

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exhorts it to be devoted in worship to that Supreme Being, who is the Lord of the Immortals, who, though transcendental in His loftiness is yet readily accessible to all who by His grace cleanses and purifies the mind and heart. 'Surrender in worship at His glorious feet and be redeemed', says the Āḷvār.

In the *Tiruviruttaṁ* Nammāḷvār prays for the riddance of body-association, which hinders *Bhagavad-anubhava*. The *Tiruvāciriyaṁ* relates to that *anubhava*, the experience of the unique excellences of the Lord. The *Tiruvandādi* shows how the longing grows deeper with every experience, and tends to break all bounds and overflow all boundaries. The *Tiruvoymoḷi* describes the way in which the Lord Himself nurtured the Āḷvār's God-love, and led him through the stages of Parā-bhakti, Parā jñāna, and Parama Bhakti to the final goal of the highest Purushārtha.

Nammāḷvār is one of the twelve great Āḷvārs, — their number is twelve, if following tradition we include among them Āṇḍāḷ, the divine daughter of Periyāḷvār, and Madhura Kavi, the devoted disciple of Nammāḷvār, — but Nammāḷvār is regarded as the greatest of them all, and described as the Avayavin in relation to whom the others are *avayavas* or limbs.

Of the other Āḷvārs Poigai Āḷvār, Bhutattāḷvār and Peyāḷvār are the first chronologically, and are known as Mudalāḷvārs. Others beginning with Tirumalisai Āḷvār follow these. The mystic vision of Mudalāḷvārs is unsurpassed for its sublimity, sweep and cosmic grandeur. The Mudalāḷvārs saw the universe itself as an 'expression of Love and every event of it as an act of dedication'.

Madhurakavi's devotion to Nammāḷvār was so complete and undivided that it made him declare that he 'knew of no other Deity' than his Master, Nammāḷvār, the 'Nambi of Kurugur'.

Tirumangai and Tondaradippodi Āḷvārs were reformed souls, and their songs speak of the miracle of their transformation, and of God's love and mercy that wrought it. Tirumangai Āḷvār's *pāśurams* contain the message of the mystic union of man and God, of the marriage of the soul with the Super-soul. Tirumangai Āḷvār, who visited every sacred shrine in the country, is next only to Nammāḷvār in the number of hymns sung; and his six Prabandhas comprising over a thousand hymns are regarded as the six *aṅgas* of the four Vedas enshrined in Nammāḷvār's four Prabandhas.

Tondaradippodi Āḷvār, whose very name suggests the limit of humility reached by him, was content to call himself a 'particle of dust' at the feet of the servants of God. He composed the ten Pāśurams of 'Tiruppalli Ezhuchi' and the forty five Pāśurams of 'Tirumālai'. The hymn of Tiruppānāḷvār is a song of ecstasy uttered when he beheld the beatific form of the Lord at Srirangam, and opens with the words 'Amalan-Ādi-Pirān', which describes the unique excellence of the Supreme.

Periyāḷvār was specially charmed by the Avatār of Krishna, who it is said built a shrine for Himself in the Āḷvār's heart — *Vishnu Chitta* is the other name of Periyāḷvār. His constant meditation on the Lord of his heart took varied forms, in which he so fully forgot his own empirical identity that believing himself to be the Mother Yashoda or the Gopis of Brindāvan he re-lived the experience of the hoary times. Periyāḷvār has also the unique distinction of having sung 'Pallāṇḍu' to the Lord, a rare form of benediction (born out of total absorption in divine love), whose real significance is too deep and delicate for common language. The *Tiruppāvai* of Āṇḍāl is well known for its lyrical beauty and spiritual substance. The *Tiruppāvai* combines in itself simplicity of diction with profundity of philosophy.

Tirumaḷiśai Āḷvār, known also as 'Bhakti-Sāra', was a great Yogin. His devotion to Vishnu brooked no compromise or concession. Indeed, all the Āḷvārs were devotees of Vishnu, and they were all equally steadfast

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and one-pointed in their devotion, and they sang of the several Avatārs of Vishnu.

The Āḷvārs were particularly fascinated by His manifestations in 'Arca' form, that is as He appeared to them in the several sacred shrines of the land. They were deeply touched by His infinite mercy in making Himself easily accessible in this form to men. They felt His immediate presence at these shrines, and were moved to tears in their contemplation of His *guṇas*. That was the setting in which their songs took shape. Wherever they turned they saw God, who seemed so near and yet so far, playing hide-and-seek as it were, with them. Their hymns beautifully contrast the states of union and separation between which they alternated, the joy of Saṁśleṣa and the pain of Viśleṣa.

Every line of the hymns of the Āḷvārs reveals a vision and records an experience. To the Āḷvārs all things are God — 'the food they eat, the water they drink, the betel they chew'. The Āḷvārs are magnificent souls, for they decline to see anything but God anywhere. 'No', they declare, 'our eyes will not alight on other things, for they have seen and known the Supreme.' Their devotion is all-absorbing and their Vairāgya deep-rooted. They spurn the ephemeral pleasures of life, and set little store by earthly goods.

Kulaśekara Āḷvār was a King, but he renounced his kingdom and chose to lead the life of a humble servant of God. He saw that all devotion must lead to self-surrender and service. His own devotion was most remarkable in that it led to absolute self-effacement. He longed for nothing more than a place on the sacred hills of Tirupati, where the Lord had taken His abode in 'Arca' form. He did not mind what he was there, a creeper by the pathway, a fish in the holy pond, a pillar supporting the holy structure, or even a mere stone-step to be trodden on by streams of devotees at the entrance to the holy shrine. 'Let me become anything, but let me be in His manifest presence', pleads the Āḷvār.

SAMKHYA CONCEPTION OF TANMATRA: A CRITICAL EXPOSITION

ANIMA SEN GUPTA

THE conception of *tanmātra* as a category (*tattva*) of the physical world is often misunderstood and misinterpreted. This is perhaps due to the fact that in the original literature of the classical Sāṁkhya, this category has not been fully expounded.

TANMATRA AS EXPOUNDED BY DIFFERENT SAMKHYACHARYAS

In *Tattva kaumudī*, Vācaspati Miśra has simply said that sound and the rest in their subtle forms are non-specific modifications of *tāmasa ahaṁkara* because the particle *mātra* in the term *tanmātra* connotes that these subtle elements are devoid of specific characters in the forms of calmness, turbulence, delusiveness etc. and as such these are not objects of direct experience of the ordinary human beings. From these *tanmātras* proceed respectively the five gross elements — *ākāśa*, air, fire, water and earth.

In the *Gauḍapāda Bhāṣya* on *Sāṁkhya Kārika* * again, we find the following passage :

> *yāni tanmātrānyahaṁkārādutpadyante . . . . .*
> *etāni aviśeṣā ucyante, devānāmete*
> *sukhalakṣaṇa viṣayā duḥkhamoka rahitāh,*
> *. tebhyaḥ pañcebhyastanmātrebhyah pañcamahābhūtāni . . . . .*

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That is to say, Gauḍapāda, too, has simply stated that these are subtle essences of sound, touch etc. and that these are devoid of specific characteristics due to which they cannot be known directly by ordinary human beings. These are the objects of enjoyment of the Gods and as such they are devoid of painfulness and delusiveness etc. From these five subtle elements have emerged the five gross elements.

While commenting on *sūtra* 1 (*aviśeṣādviśeṣārambhaḥ*) of the third chapter of the *Sāṁkhya Pravacana Sūtra,* Vijñāna Bhikṣu has only stated that these *tanmātras* are non-specific modifications and that these are the material cause of the five gross elements.

Commenting on the same *sūtra* Aniruddha has said : 'The diverse, i.e. the gross elements — arises from that which is not diverse : i.e. from the subtle elements,' (English translation : R. Garbe). Commenting on *sūtra* 18 of the third chapter of the said text, Aniruddha has remarked further : 'From the egotising organ which is a modification of the great one arise the eleven viz., the eleven senses which consist of *sattva* (i.e. which are produced by the co-operation of *sattva*). The subtle elements are produced by the co-operation of *tamas*' (English translation : R. Garbe).

The passages quoted above particularly reveal the following notable characteristics of the five subtle elements : (1) *Tanmātras* have emerged from the *bhūtādi* or *tāmasa ahaṁkāra.* (2) They are non-specific subtle essences which produce the gross elements and their qualities. (3) They are infra-sensible and therefore cannot be directly perceived by the powers of the senses of the ordinary human beings. (4) These *tanmātras,* however, are not as undifferentiated and indeterminate as the mere mass or *bhūtādi.* There is some determination even in *tanmātric* stage as they are already called *śabda-tanmātra, sparśa-tanmātra* etc.

The gross elements which are produced from the *tanmātras* constitute the last limit of the process of *prākṛtic* evolution. Evolutionary passage, according to the Sāṁkhya school, is simply the passage from the subtle to the gross. After the emergence of the gross elements, the process of evolution stops in the sense that the *pāñcabhautic* changes are simply changes from gross to more gross.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE MAHABHUTAS WHICH ARE THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF THE PANCATANMATRAS

(a) *Ākāśa* is the *śabdamaya sattā* of the external world. (b) Air is the *sparśamaya sattā* of the external world. (c) Fire is the *rūpamaya sattā* of the external world. (d) Water is the *rasamaya sattā* of the external world. (e) Earth is the *gandhamaya sattā* of the external world.

The external world is characterised by the qualities of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. The substratum of each of these qualities or the possessor of each of these qualities is called a *bhūta* or element. A question may be posed here ; why did Sāṁkhya admit the existence of *pañcatanmātra* as an intermediate category between *tāmasa ahaṁkāra* and the five gross elements ? The five gross elements could have been derived directly from the *tāmasa ahaṁkāra.* This is not possible because of the following reasons :

Ahaṁkāra, as we know, remains purely psychical when it emerges from the intellect. So, *ahaṁkāra* cannot be the immediate cause of these gross elements as there cannot be a direct transition from purely psychical to purely physical principles. Hence, there is a necessity for holding that in one of its aspects, *ahaṁkāra* develops in such a manner that *tamoguṇa* becomes the dominating element thereby changing the character of this aspect of *ahaṁkāra* from purely psychical to semi-physical. According to the Sāṁkhya, the psychical differs from the physical only in being more subtle in nature due to the supremacy of *sattva guṇa.* Since in the *bhūtādi*

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aspect (*tāmasa* aspect of *ahaṁkāra*) *tamo-guṇa* has started gaining supremacy over the other two *guṇas*, this aspect of the egotising principle has begun to change from more subtle to less subtle or gross. Even then the *tāmasa ahaṁkāra* is not gross enough to produce the five gross elements. Moreover, the *bhūtādi* or *tāmasa ahaṁkāra* is a mere mass wholly undifferentiated and indeterminate whereas the five gross elements are fully differentiated and definitely characterised as pleasing, painful and sluggish. Hence, *bhūtādi* cannot be the direct cause of the five gross elements. The immediate causal state must be one in which differentiation has just started in a very vague manner (so vague that this stage cannot be described as specific): this stage is the *tanmātric* stage. It is, therefore, evident that the five gross elements cannot emerge unless there is the *tanmātric* stage in which differentiation has just started with the result that *tanmātras* have been distinguished as *śabda-tanmātras*, *sparśa-tanmātra* and so on. The qualities which remain latent in the *tanmātric stage* become fully manifest in the stage of the five gross elements.

Tanmatras and Paramanus

The *tanmātras* of the Sāṁkhya school can be compared to a certain extent with the *paramāṇus* of the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika school. Just as the four kinds of *paramāṇus* are the subtle causes of the four gross elements, in the same manner the *tanmātras* are the subtle causes of the five gross elements. Both *tanmātras* and the *paramāṇus* are to be known through inference only. In both, the qualities of sound, touch etc., exist in a latent form because of the very subtle nature of these infra-sensible elements. Just as in the tanmātric stage, *tanmātras* could be differentiated at least as *śabda-tanmātra*, *sparśa-tanmātra* etc., in the same manner the atoms also could be differentiated into four kinds.

According to both Sāṁkhya and Nyāya-vaiśeṣika, the qualities of the *Mahābhūtas* are due to the qualities latent in these subtle causal substances.

There are, however, some important points of difference between the *tanmātras* and the *paramāṇus*. *Paramāṇus* are co-eternal with God and they constitute the ultimate material stuff of the universe. The *tanmātras*, on the otherhand, are not eternal, being the products of *prakṛti*: they do not also constitute the root-cause of the universe.

The Sāṁkhya does not hold substance and quality as distinct and different as has been held by the Nyāyavaiśeṣika system. On the other hand, this school admits *tādātmya* between the quality and the possessor of the quality. So, it does not matter in the least whether the *tanmātras* of the Sāṁkhya school are considered as substances or as qualities because they are, truly speaking, both and neither exclusively. For this reason, whereas in the Sāṁkhya-system, the *tanmātras* are the causes of the five gross elements as well as of their qualities, in the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika philosophy *paramāṇus* (being only substances) are the causes of the four *Mahābhūtas* and the four *Mahābhūtas* are causes of their respective qualities. (The substance, being the material cause of the quality, comes into being earlier than its quality.) In spite of these differences, we may hold logically that as the basic principles of the physical world the *tanmātras* occupy a place similar to that of the *paramāṇus*. These *tanmātras*, indeed, lay down the foundation stone of this multi-coloured universe — a universe which is known and acted upon by the organs of sensation and action.

Tanmatras and the Organs of Sensation

Just as *tanmātras* have emerged directly from the *tāmasa ahaṁkāra*, in the same manner all organs including mind have emerged directly from the *sāttvika ahaṁkāra*. Thus, *ahaṁkāra* is the *upādāna-kāraṇa* of both the organs and the five subtle elements —

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although in its different aspects. It is therefore quite natural for the sense-organs to have some connection with the *pañcatanmatras*. Since these *tanmātras* are non-specific, they cannot directly become the specific objects which are to be known by the sense-organs. Hence, *Mahābhūtas* arise as specific modification from the *tanmātras* and the specific objects of the sense-organs are composed of them.

In Sāṁkhya phiiosophy, the word *indriya* (sense organ) does not refer to its outer physical part. The real sense is the inner faculty which is *āhaṁkārika* in nature. The outer physical part of a sense-organ is constituted of the physical elements which have *tanmātras* as their material stuff. These *tanmātras* again are *āhaṁkārika* — although there is a predomination of the *tamoguṇa* in them. The real *indriyas* (inner faculties) therefore are not radically distinct from the physical outer parts which are constituted of *tanmātras* and which become the mediating agents between the sense and the object. The process can be explained in the following manner : Take the case of the olfactory perception of the smell of a flower. The flower being *pāñcabhautika* in nature possesses *tanmātras* as its material stuff. Since *tanmātras* are *āhaṁkārika,* there is a natural kinship between the object of sense on the one hand and the outer and inner parts of the sense-organ on the other. As soon as the nose comes in contact with the flower, the *gandha tanmātra* of the peripheral organ moves out and unites with the *gandha tanmātra* of the flower ; as a result of this, the inner sense-organ is at once stimulated ; being stimulated, it forms an indeterminate olfactory impression of smell which is regarded as *nirvikalpaka indriyavṛtti.* (The whole process of the *indriya* becoming stimulated and assuming the form of the object is known as *vṛtti.*) Immediately on the arousal of the *indriyavṛtti* mind, egotising principle and *buddhi* start their respective functions and a determinate *buddhivṛtti* of smell results therefrom. The consciousness of the self is reflected through it and the *vṛtti* is manifested. This is phenomenal knowledge. The gross physical elements, being gross in nature, are far removed from *ahaṁkāra.* Moreover, due to very strong influence of the predominating *tamoguṇa,* these physical elements become heavy and consequently possess very low degree of mobility. Therefore, the peripheral organ cannot go out to the object. The *tanmātras*, on the other hand, being subtle physical elements and being more *āhaṁkārika* in nature than the gross physical elements, can be radiated outside both by the object and the sense-organ. *Prāpyakāritā* of the sense-organ, therefore, really signifies that the inherent *tanmātras* of the sense-organ meet the inherent *tanmātras* of the object. The inner sense-faculty is carried to the object through the *tanmātras* in a continuous process and is modified in the form of the object. The whole of this process may be regarded as *vṛtti* and as such we may also hold logically that *vṛtti* connects the senses with their objects.

The *vṛtti* is neither a part nor a quality of the senses. It is not a quality because the quality of an object is static in nature. If *vṛtti* is regarded as a quality, then it will be incapable of connecting an *indriya* with its object and will thus fail to serve its purpose. *Vṛtti* is also not a part of the sense-organ. If it is a part and if this part is supposed to go out to the object then there will be a gap between the *mūlasthāna* of the *indriya* and the object. The process will not be a continuous one and hence there will be no knowledge due to dissociation of the *mūlasthāna* of the *indriya* from the object. Hence Bhikṣu has said : '*visphulingavad vibhaktāmśe rūpādivadguṇaśca na vṛttiḥ*'. We may however regard *vṛtti* as a substance because it is the modification of a substance (*indriya*). If we stretch a piece of rubber then the stretched portion (which is a modification of the original piece) will be called 'rubber' and not anything else. Similarly *vṛtti* is a modification by which *indriya* reaches the object and since

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indriya is a substance *vṛtti* also may be regarded as substance. Of course, Bhikṣu has said : '*Vṛttir dravya eveti niyamo nāsti*' because *vṛtti* means *vyāpara* i.e. function or *kriyā*. Even if we hold that *vṛtti* is function or *kriyā*, then also there is no harm in calling *vṛtti* substance. This is because *kriyā* is always *dravyāśrita* and whenever there is *kriyā*, there is *dravya* also. Moreover the Sāṁkhya does not admit distinction and difference between *kriyā* and *kriyāvān*.*

* For a detailed study of the Sāṁkhya system, the author's three books : (1) *The Evolution of Sāṁkhya School of Thought*, (2) *Chāndogya Upaniṣad : Sāṁkhya Point of View* and (3) *Essays on Sāṁkhya and Other Systems of Indian Philosophy* will be found interesting.

DEFINITION AND FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

N. SATYANARAYANA

METHOD-PHILOSOPHIES

PHILOSOPHY in general, can be looked at from two perspectives. One is method-philosophy and the other existence-philosophy. (This should not be confused with mere existentialism.) As examples of method-philosophy, we can take Logical positivism, and Language Analysis. To quote Wittgenstein, 'The right method of philosophy would be this : To say nothing except what can be said, i.e. the propositions of natural science, that is something that has nothing to do with philosophy and then always, when some one else wished to say something metaphysical to demonstrate to him that he had given no meaning to certain signs in his propositions. This method would be unsatisfying to the other — he would not have the feeling that we are teaching him philosophy — but it would be the only strictly correct method.'[10] Mr A. J. Ayer comments, 'The Vienna circle, however, were not content with quite so negative a conception of philosophy as this. They thought that the philosopher still had a useful function to perform in analysing and clarifying concepts which figure in the every day, and also in the scientific use of language, but chiefly in the scientific use, as this was held to be more important. Philosophy was to become the logic of science.'[10]

Here a legitimate question arises : does the scientist require the help of a philosopher to clarify his concepts? Why the philosopher wants to be an uninvited guest? Is not the scientist himself a better judge of the concepts he employs? These questions remain to be answered.

Regarding the other aspect, Language Analysis : what is the purpose of language? It is supposed to serve as a vehicle of communication, to convey ideas. It is only a symbol. Of course a precise use of language is most welcome. If one constructs an ideal language what is the ultimate reference to judge its correctness? This only leads to a further problem. To identify Language Analysis or analysis of scientific concepts with philosophy is like mistaking grammar for literature. Wittgenstein writes 'The concept of meaning has its place in a primitive idea of the way language functions. But one can also say that it is the idea of language, more primitive than ours.'[11] This only illustrates that the entire discussion centres round the vehicle of communication — the language and the method of expression and analysis. But it neglects the vital aspect of philosophy, viz. dealing with ideas.

Philosophy in the West, as has been discussed above, is an intellectual activity always

[10] Ayer, A. J. : *Revolution in Philosophy : Vienna Circle*, p. 179.

[11] Wittgenstein Ludwig : *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 3e.

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groping in the land of uncertainty, to find out the new, and it had in fact brought many problems to light ; whereas method-philosophy confines itself only to the outer form and does not concern itself with the content. It is like putting the cart before the horse, mistaking grammar for literature. At best it is only a preparation for serious philosophy, where the method could be utilized, although not possible to do so at every stage.

EXISTENCE-PHILOSOPHIES

All those philosophies, either metaphysical or physical, which grapple with the true problems of reality in its multi-dimensions are existence philosophies. It is in this sense that the tentative definitions given at the beginning, stand the test of reason. This should not be identified with Existentialism, although it includes it. Each existence philosophy implies a particular method based on and conditioned by its subject of inquiry and the goal it has in view. But it only makes use of the method and does not get identified with it. Jean Paul Sartre thinks that 'There is only intuitive knowledge. Deduction and discursive argument, incorrectly called examples of knowing, are only instruments which lead to intuition'.[12] He further elaborates that 'knowledge appears then as a mode of being. Knowing is neither a relation established after the event between two things, nor is it an activity of one of these two things, nor is it a quality or property or virtue.'[13] The knowledge in the case of method-philosophers is reduced to methodology, whereas in the case of existentialists, it is raised to the level of being. But on reflection it is clear that knowledge is in-between the two extreme positions and philosophy has to maintain this delicate balance, although it may proceed further. Prof. F. Schmidt thinks that 'not enough attention has been given to the basis of Existentialism'. He continues, 'I contend that it is not a new form of metaphysics or science of psychology, not another system of ethics or theory of knowledge, nor is it merely the product of two world wars and their aftermath. I suggest that it has pointed to a neglected aspect of human experience and shown how to separate it, by analysis, by the usual pigeon-holes provided by philosophy and science.'[14] This shows that Existentialism is bringing many neglected aspects of human experience to light, although there are differences among the Existentialists themselves. Karl Jaspers defines, 'potential Existence' as 'that which never becomes object, the origin of my thoughts and action' and as that 'which is always in relation to its own self and thus also to its Transcendence.'[15] It goes beyond the Existentialism conceived of by Professor Paul.

THE GOAL AND FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY

The real function of philosophy is the understanding of one's self, and one's place in the universe and society. It should do justice to all aspects of human personality and existence in general. This understanding must be such that it should liberate people from bondage both internal, and external. It must transform the human personality to express its higher nature. The goal is self-realization, to put it in the traditional terminology, and its function is to dispel ignorance. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa said 'when a man has realized God, he forgets His external manifestations and the glories of His creation. Verily, His blessed vision obliterates the consciousness of His splendours ; for, immersed as he is in the bliss divine, the devotee has lost all bearings.'[16] This is the Indian heritage in philosophy, as it implies both a way and a view of life. Let me conclude with a Upaniṣadic passage, 'Listen to me, ye sons of Immortal Spirit, ye who live in the heavenly abode, I have known the Supreme Person whose light shines forth from beyond the darkness.'

(Concluded)

[12] Sartre Jean Paul : *Being and Nothingness*, p. 172.

[13] *ibid.*, p. 174.

[14] Schmidt, Paul F. : *Real Basis of Existentialism*.

[15] Jaspers, Karl : *Man in the Modern Age*, p. 49.

[16] *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (according to M.). Vol. II, p. 12.

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THE POETIC ELEMENT IN VĀLMĪKI'S RAMĀYANA*

G. RAMAKRISHNA

It seems that Goethe—the great German poet and dramatist — evinced keen interest in the study of Indian literature, a sympathetic admirer of Indian culture as he was. It is said that he had great appreciation for the Gīta-Govinda, the Meghadūta, the Sākuntala and nay, even for the Nala-Damayantī episode. The keenness of his study of Indian literature can be easily measured when we remember that he censured the German translator of the Gīta-Govinda for distortions and once wrote to Schiller that he would himself translate into German — from English — some significant passages of the Gīta-Govinda. Speaking about this aspect of Goethe's interest in Indian Literature Mr. S. Subhash Chandra says :[1] 'Surprisingly enough, Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa was a source of disappointment to Goethe. He seems to have read Rāmāyaṇa for the first time in June 1808. Using Schlegel's German translation of the great Indian epic, he tried to get access to the core of the scriptures. Somehow he could not grasp the greatness pregnant in the creation of Vālmīki. The following entry in his diary embodies his first impressions of the Rāmāyaṇa : " 23rd June 1808 : Midday — Schlegel's translation of the Rāmāyaṇa. I am convinced that the sage Vālmīki has merely epitomised the tale. The poem is laconic, dry and bereft of substantial content. *There are but few traces of poetry.* It is practically bereft of narrative elements " (Goethe : *Tagebuecher* ; Munich : Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1963–Vol. I, p. 249). It is difficult to account for Goethe's failure to appreciate the greatness of Vālmīki's epic work. It is quite possible that Schlegel's translation left much to be desired. This lukewarm response to the Rāmāyaṇa becomes truly inexplicable, when one takes into account the fact that the story of Bhagavān Rāmachandra was not unknown to Goethe before he read Schlegel's rendering of the great epic. From his autobiography we learn that as a young man he had come across the story of Rāmāyaṇa while perusing Dapper's account of his travels. He appears to have been fascinated by several episodes culled from the Indian epic. Indeed, he seems to have relished narrrating these episodes. Further, Hanumān appears to have been the favourite of the young poet (Goethe : *Dichting und wahrheit* ; Munich : Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1962–Vol. III, p. 87). It is difficult to ascertain, whether Goethe eventually came to acquire a more positive appreciation of the immortal creation of Vālmīki. Apart from a barren entry in his diary (dated 8th June 1816), which merely informs us that Goethe had sent a fragment of Rāmāyaṇa to Major Von Knebel, no other statement concerning Vālmīki and his work can be traced in the writings of Goethe.

'Naturally, a personality like Goethe could not be satisfied with mere isolated appreciations of the leading specimens of Indian culture. He was not content with merely passing appreciative remarks concerning the poetry of India. He must have pondered frequently over the underlying trends of the Indian heritage. We are fortunate in possessing one such extract where he summarises his appraisal of the general features of the Indian literature. At the very outset of his short but penetrating essay on the Indian literature Goethe avers that the basic feature of the Indian lite-

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[1] Goethe and Indian Culture : *Vedanta Kesari* ; Vol. 51. No. 4 (August 1964), P. 271.

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rary heritage is the endeavour to arrive at a happy synthesis of religion and philosophy. Indian literature, maintains Goethe, successfully avoids conflict with either religion or philosophy. Guided by inner depth and accompained by an integral dignity, the poets of India arrive at a genuine coalescence of religion and philosophy, which deserves to be unreservedly admired by every reflective being' (Goethe: *Schriften Zur Literatur,* Vol. II, p. 176).

Two points emerge from this long quotation for our serious consideration; they are that Goethe derided the *Rāmāyaṇa* in no ambiguous terms for its containing (i) 'but very few traces of poetry' and (ii) for its being 'practically bereft of narrative elements'. It is of little satisfaction for us to know the reason for this surmise of Goethe. Whether it was Schlegel's translation that was responsible for this or whether it was something else that resulted in Goethe's derision, is of little consequence to us. The fact remains that Goethe saw hardly any trace of true poetry in the *Rāmāyaṇa.* This must take all lovers of Indian literature by surprise. The spirit of poetry has been appreciably manifest in India right from the early ages. The Ṛgveda is a fine specimen of poetry if it is viewed apart from its other aspects — ritualistic and philosophical.[2] The Buddhist tradition also records poetry. The "Vaṁgīsa saṁyutta" of the Sagāthavagga of the *Saṁyutta nikāya,* for example, gives instances exhibiting the poetic genius of a Bhikkhu called Vaṁgīsa. So, poetry does not start with the Rāmāyaṇa. It is an *ādikāvya* only where Kāvya connotes poetry as the later rhetoricians understand it. Even later writers who took up the subject of this epic for their writings have appreciated the poetic elements of the Rāmāyaṇa and have scrupulously preserved them in their own works, though their narrations are sometimes different; that is, they have tried not only to narrate the story of the epic but also to narrate it in a strikingly poetic way. The *Paumacariya* of Vimalasūri and the Rāmāyaṇa version of Sīlācārya as found in the *Caupannamahāpuruṣa-cariya* amply illustrate this point.

In this paper it is proposed to study only *some,* three or four passages of the Rāmāyaṇa and point out the poetic element in them.

1. Ayodhyākāṇḍa 97.19[3] reads:

तथोक्तो धर्मशीलेन भ्रात्रा तस्य हिते रतः।
लक्ष्मणः प्रविवेशेव स्वानि गात्राणि लज्जया॥

The background to this stanza is important for a correct understanding of its poetic importance. Bharata with a large retinue is on his way to Citrakūṭa to meet and appease Rāma, and to request him to return to Ayodhyā at once. Lakṣmaṇa sees this large army and is roused by the thought that Bharata is out to vanquish Rāma completely. Rāma chides Lakṣmaṇa for entertaining such a thought and taunts him by telling him that he would plead with Bharata on his behalf (i.e. on Lakṣmaṇa's behalf) to part with the kingdom in his (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa's) favour if he should so desire. Rāma says:

उच्यमानोऽपि भरतो मया लक्ष्मण तत्त्वतः।
राज्यमस्मै प्रयच्छेति बाढमित्येव वक्ष्यति॥

At this, Lakṣmaṇa felt so much ashamed of himself that he 'contracted himself within his body' (*lakṣmaṇaḥ praviveśeva svāni gātrāṇi lajjayā*). Despite my best efforts I have not been able to translate this aptly and express — or rather suggest — all that Vālmīki has put into it (a similar description of Sītā is to be found in the Yuddhakāṇḍa 119.3: *Praviśantīva gātrāṇi svānyeva janakātmajā; Vākśalyaistais saśalyeva bhṛśamaśrūṇyavartayat*). This one sentence portrays most vividly the characters of the three persons, namely Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Bharata, as also the relation

[2] There is philosophical import in the poetry of almost all poets, say for example T. S. Eliot and Robert Browning. But that poetry is not looked upon as a compendium of philosophy.

[3] All references to the *Rāmāyaṇa* in this paper are to the Vavilla Press edition, 1951.

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among them. First of all we have to consider why Lakṣmaṇa suspected Bharata of being desirous of vanquishing Rāma. It is not that he hated Bharata so much, but that he loved Rāma so much more. We are reminded of the passage in the Bālakāṇḍa 18.27-30 :

बाल्यात्प्रभृति सुस्निग्धो लक्ष्मणो लक्ष्मिवर्धनः ।
रामस्य लोकरामस्य भ्रातुर्ज्येष्ठस्य नित्यशः ।
सर्वप्रियकरस्तस्य रामस्यापि शरीरतः ।
लक्ष्मणो लक्ष्मिसम्पन्नो बहिः प्राण इवापरः ।
न च तेन विना निद्रां लभते पुरुषोत्तमः ।
मृष्टमन्नमुपानीतमश्नाति न हि तं विना ।
यदा हि हयमारूढो मृगयां याति राघवः ।
तदैनं पृष्ठतोऽभ्येति सधनुः परिपालयन् ।

(From childhood onwards the loving Lakshmana, the enhancer of good fortune, was always the performer of all good acts towards Rama, his elder brother, and the joy of all the world. To Rama too Lakshmana was, as it were, his alter ego. Without Lakshmana Rama could not sleep, nor could Rama relish any delicacies unless Lakshmana partakes of it too ; and when Rama went a-hunting on horse Lakshmana faithfully followed him, armed with bow, always guarding him.) And again in Ayodhyākāṇḍa 4. 43-44, Rama says :

लक्ष्मणेमां मया सार्धं प्रशाधि त्वं वसुन्धराम् ।
द्वितीयं मेऽन्तरात्मानं त्वामियं श्रीरुपस्थिता ।
सुमित्रे भुंक्ष्व भोगांस्त्वमिष्टान् राज्यफलानि च ।
जीवितं च हि राज्यं च त्वदर्थमभिकामये ।

(O Lakshmana, rule this earth along with me. This fortune awaits you, my second inner-self. O son of Sumitra, enjoy the choicest pleasures as also the fruits of the kingdom. I desire kingdom and even life only for you.)

What wonder then that Lakṣmaṇa should have suspected Bharata of an evil mind ! But Rāma knows not only Lakṣmaṇa but also Bharata. In fact he knows Bharata so well that he has not the least doubt that Bharata would readily and gladly relinquish the kingship in favour of Lakṣmaṇa if only Rāma were to express that wish. And when Rāma so chides Lakṣmaṇa, what is the latter to do ? Can he help blushing ? And could this blush of Lakṣmaṇa be better expressed than by the verse '*Lakṣmaṇaḥ praviveśeva svāni gātrāṇi lajjayā*' ? Is it not a marvellous piece of poetry which can hardly be excelled ?

2. The next passage that we take for consideration is from Ayodhyākāṇḍa 99. 37-39 which reads :

इत्येवं विलपन् दीनं प्रखिन्नमुखपङ्कजः ।
पादावप्राप्य रामस्य पपात भरतो रुदन् ।
दुःखाभितप्तो भरतो राजपुत्रो महाबलः ।
उक्त्वार्येति सकृद्दीनं पुनर्नोवाच किंचन ।
बाष्पापिहितकण्ठश्च प्रेक्ष्य रामं यशस्विनम् ।
आर्येत्येवाभिसंक्रुश्य व्याहर्तुं नाशकत्ततः ।

Bharata has reached the place of Rāma's hermitage and has seen him. He is overwhelmed with sorrow at the sight of Rāma and curses himself as the person responsible for the grievous state of Rāma. His mind is full of thoughts of various kinds. He must have rehearsed a hundred times in his mind the things that he would say to Rāma and the things that he would do on seeing him. The eagerness to meet Rāma and pray for his excuse is so much in Bharata's mind that on seeing him he rushes and falls at the feet of Rāma *even before he has reached those feet !* (*pādāvaprāpya rāmasya papāta bharato rudan*). And what explanations did he give ? Had he not a lot to say about Daśaratha and Kaikeyī, about himself being not the least responsible for the unhappy incident, about the necessity for forgetting all past events, and for Rāma's excusing him and returning to Ayodhyā ? With so many things in the mind it is natural that Bharata should be full of anguish. And on seeing Rāma it breaks open in a heart-rending way leaving Bharata hardly capable of uttering anything beyond the two words 'ārya' and that twice. This is the situation that he finds himself in, in spite of the fact that he had determined before hand

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what he had to do (See Ayo. 99.17 : *iti śoka samākṛṣṭaḥ pādeṣvadya prasādayan ; rāmasya nipatiṣyāmi sītāyā lakṣmaṇasya ca*). The whole scene could not have been pictured in a better way and it is no exaggeration to say that this poetic feat cannot be improved upon. The line "*Pādāvaprāpya Rāmasya papāta Bharato rudan*" is the height of poetic imagination and suggests everything that a thorough description of the situation might fail to impart. And the analysis of Bharata's mind cannot be better portrayed than by saying : '*Uktvā āryeti sakṛddīnaṁ punarnovāca kiñcana*'. These two lines present Bharata in such a masterly way that the character of Bharata in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa can fully be understood with the help of only these two lines. If this is not poetry, what else is ?[4] Ānandavardhana says in his *Dhvanyāloka* (1.4) :

Pratīyamānaṁ punaranyadeva
Vastvasti vāṇīṣu mahākavīnām ;
Yat tat prasiddhāvayavātiriktaṁ
Vibhāti lāvaṇyamivāṅganāsu.

(In the compositions of great poets we find that the words reveal plainly and directly their actual connotation. But over and above this, these same words also convey a different meaning which lies embedded in them, which is immanent in them. — Translation of P. S. Sastri : The Ṛgvedic poetic spirit ; ABORI, Vol. 38, p. 72). As an illustration of this we can easily point out the two stanzas that we have just considered. Such passages of high poetic value occur in abundance in the Rāmāyaṇa. This is true of the Uttarakāṇḍa also. Whether or not the Uttarakāṇḍa formed part of the original Rāmāyaṇa and whether or not Vālmīki was its author is a question beyond the scope of the discussion of this paper.[5]

It may, however, be noted that there are passages which are quite poetic in nature in the Uttarakāṇḍa also.

3. Kaikasī — daughter of Sumāli, one of the three *rākṣasa* leaders inhabiting the *rasātala* — is described in the following terms in the Uttarakāṇḍa 9.16-17, when she approached the sage Viśravas who was performing *tapasyā*:

अविचिन्त्य तु तां वेलां दारुणां पितृगौरवात् ।
उपसृत्याग्रतस्तस्य चरणाधोमुखी स्थिता ॥
विलिखन्ती मुहुर्भूमिमङ्गुष्ठाग्रेण भामिनी ।
स तु तां प्रेक्ष्य सुश्रोणीं पूर्णचन्द्रनिभाननाम् ॥

[4] The commentary 'Tilaka' of Rāma does not catch the poetic excellence in this passage. It just says : '*Pādāvaprāpyeti duḥkhātiśayavaśāt. Tata eva punarnovāca*'. The lawyer-like behaviour of Śakuntalā in Duṣyanta's court presented in the Mahābhārata compares most unfavourably with this gem of a poetry of the Rāmāyaṇa.

[5] It may be noted in this connection that Govindarāja (of C. 1400-1500 A.D.), a Śrīvaiṣṇava commentator of the Rāmāyaṇa, has detected many an interpolation and wrong reading in the Rāmāyaṇa and has even done away with many chapters in the Uttarakāṇḍa. (See K. V. Ramaswami Iyengar : Govindarāja ; ABORI, Vol. 23, Pp. 32 & 48). We need not be under the impression that the ancient learned men of India had no sense of critical approach. They were not accepting all that came to their hands as authoritative and original. Madhvācārya in his *Śrimanmahābhārata tātparyanirṇaya* says :

Kvacidgranthān prakṣipanti kvacidantaritānapi ;
Kuryuḥ kvacicca vyatyāsaṁ pramādāt kvacidanyathā.

"Interpolations, omissions and transpositions in the original text have been made either through ignorance or otherwise." It was to give a gist of the *original* Mahābhārata, as opposed to the interpolated Mahābhārata, that Madhvā undertook the task of writing an exposition of the Mahābhārata. Further, Madhvā has included the *Mūla* Rāmāyaṇa among the texts of authority that he recognises. From this it should be clear that he intended to distinguish it from the corrupted text. All this points to the fact that interpolations were recognised and treated as such even in early days.

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As a passage portraying bashfulness, this passage — particularly the line '*vilikhantī muhurbhūmim aṅguṣṭhāgreṇa bhāminī*' — does not at all lack in the poetic genius made manifest in the passage of the Kumārasaṁbhava of Kālidāsa: '*Evaṁ vādini devarṣau pārśve pituradhomukhī, līlākamalapatrāṇi gaṇayāmāsa pārvatī*', where bashfulness is pictured and which is quoted with admiration by many a rhetorician of later times.

Instances where poetic excellence is achieved by a realistic description are not wanting in the Rāmāyaṇa. The description of the Paṁpā lake may be cited in this respect. A stanza like '*pādapātpādapaṁ gacchan śailācchailaṁ vanādvanam; vāti naikarasāsvādasammodita ivānilaḥ*' (Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa 1.86), speaks gloriously for the poetic imagination of the author. His concept of beauty can be measured by a stanza like '*śokārtasyāpi me paṁpā śobhate citrakānanā; vyavakīrṇā bahuvidhaiḥ puṣpaiśśītodakā śivā*' (Kiṣ. 1.6). The standard of his culture can be understood by a study of the picture of Hanumān presented to us in his first encounter with Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.[6] The marvellous capacity of the poet in narration can be seen in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, about which a critic remarks: 'The Ayodhyākāṇḍa is full of narrative incidents. The life of man has not been pictured in greater detail in any other poem. This clearly flashes itself to our mind by a persual of the pictures of Daśaratha and his wives' (Śrīnivāsa: Vālmīki). We thus see that the poetry of Vālmīki is not artificial but natural. Writing about the poetry of the Georgians, A.C. Ward says in his Twentieth Century Literature[7]: 'Most of those who contributed to Georgian poetry were able to assemble the raw materials of poetry — moons, rivers, ships, hills, colours, flowers, birds, buds, summer nights, dusky passions — but few of them went farther or deeper than the assembling and pretty arrangement of poetic material'. This unhappy feature can be seen in some Sanskrit poets also. But Vālmīki as a true poet is nowhere near such mediocrity.

Before concluding, a word may be said about the place of literature in Yoga. As Abhinavagupta puts it, Rasa — the essence of all good literature — is psycho-physical in nature. (See his Abhinavabhāratī I.22: *Śṛṅgārābhivyaktihetau sukumāre caturvidhepyabhinaye yojite madhuramantharavalanā vartanābhrūkṣepakaṭākṣādinā vinā śṛṅgārarasāsvādasya nāmāpi na saṁbhavati*). Rasa cannot be experienced only in terms of the mind; it requires the physical counterpart too. Consequently, the enjoyment of *rasa* (*rasāsvāda*) works upon the psycho-physical aspects in man even as the practice of Yoga does. Further, though the view that art is for art's sake does exist in ancient Indian works, art was not simply relegated to the position of mere *kāma*. It was, like *dharma*, profoundly transformed into 'a means essentially of experiencing *rasa* or aesthetic ecstacy, comparing it at the same time to the ineffable peace of *mokṣa* (*Parabrahmāsvādasabrahmacāritvam*). In addition to the exposition of this view in the many works of this school (of *ālaṁkārikas*), there is also the old saying that it is only the fortunate that can taste *rasa*, for it is so much like yogic experience. (*Puṇyavantaḥ pramiṇvanti yogivad rasasaṁtatim*; quoted in the *Sāhitya Darpaṇa*, Ch. III)'.[8] 'Art may, indeed, be characterised as the lay man's yoga, for the spell which it casts on one's mind is so complete'.[9]

[6] Mathew Arnold's conception of a "gentleman" has been compared with the gentleman that Vālmīki has pictured here by D. V. Gundappa in his "Saṁskṛti".

[7] The English Library Edition, 1963, P. 182.

[8] M. Hiriyanna: *The Indian Conception of Values*, *ABORI*, Vol. 19, pp. 21-22.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

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SRI KRISHNA AND THE IDEAL OF LIFE

BR. VIDYA CHAITANYA

NOWADAYS the concept of a theistic religion hardly appears to pose any problem in philosophy and religion. But it was not so in the Upaniṣadic era. The underlying thought that runs through the esoteric portion of the Vedas is that of a reality that is devoid of any form and is beyond speech and mind. The charm, rhythm and dignity of the Upaniṣadic language were appealing but unintelligible and incomprehensible to the general people. A concrete representation of Truth, Beauty and Goodness was necessitated for a meaningful blend of the doctrine and its realization, the ideal and the real. The conception of the descent of a Godhead into our empirical world is thus neither a myth nor a legend but a providential necessity which undertook to bridge over the gulf between the transcendent and the immanent, between the impersonal and the personal, between religion and philosophy. The advent of Sri Krishna, is the fulfilment of such a conception which serves a two-fold purpose :

(1) The supreme Purusa or the Upaniṣadic Reality, which exists like a pole star in its own glory unaffected by creation or dissolution, appears to assume a human form into a world of appearance and relativity, of temporal and spatial change.

(2) Secondly, in its playful mood, the eternal, infinite Spirit after accepting the limiting adjuncts of a human body becomes an object of love and devotion, of worship and contemplation to fulfil the spiritual hankering of the aspirants.

Thus, the life of this great Incarnation, who was spirit personified, is in itself an explanation of the great transition from absolutism to theism in Indian thought. It is still a wonder to see how with great love and reverence Sri Krishna, an embodiment of Vedantic Reality, is being cherished in the devoted hearts of millions of the Hindus. The growth of a religious sect on the footsteps of an Incarnation is not rare, but what is noteworthy in the case of Sri Krishna is that even after 3,000 years of his earthly existence he is held in the highest regard by millions and millions of Indians. And it is not without justification. His statesmanship, his magnificent personality, his secular wisdom and his spiritual power have been reckoned as unparalleled in the religious history of the world. Truly, Sri Krishna has been described in the *Bhāgavata* as God Himself, whereas the other Incarnations are merely parts or aspects of Īśwara.

His life history as depicted in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhāgavata* is replete with legends and sometimes appears to be full of miracles. How from a prince-charming among the cow-boys who used to sport and gambol in the breezy meadows of Vrindavan, the lad developed into a mighty hero who could destroy the demoniacal might of Śiśupāla and Jarāsandha is not known. Vrindavan-Leela, as it is popularly called by the ignorant, wherein one sees him engaged in the amorous disport with the Gopis is really an allegorical representation of a highly ecstatic play on the superconscious plane of existence devoid of any mundane tint. His political mission and social policy as revealed in a great measure in the administration of his kingdom of Dwaraka and his handling of the Kuru-Pandava affairs prove that the secular wisdom and spiritual vision can be blended in the life of a single personality.

Amidst the pageants embedded in the past in the anecdotes of Sri Krishna's life we find that therein the ideal has become the real. For could a prophet incarnate without any special mission ? And that special mission is to steer the boat of life across the turbulent and rough sea of sensuality and desire and

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harbour it safely in the haven of spiritual bliss. Life without such a directive and control is like a ship without a sail. Not destined for any goal, it is wrecked and destroyed.

On the field of Kurukshetra the mighty hordes of the Kauravas and the Pandavas stood in battle array. At this critical hour Sri Krishna delivered his ambrosial message — the Gita. The attitude of the Kaurava princes towards the Pandavas was full of hatred, rancour and jealousy of the worst type. Their plans and programmes reveal the workings of evil minds at its vilest. What they give vent to are the lowest tendencies of human mind — lust for power, jealousy, hatred and desire. The climax of the drama is reached in the game of dice as a result of which the Pandavas were exiled to a life in the forest.

The part played by Sri Krishna in the lives of the Pandavas is remarkably significant. Before the war began he plays the role of a great ambassador and a counsellor with a peace mission. His utmost effort was to avoid war. In reply to Vidura's question why he tried to negotiate for truce with the cruel king Duryodhana, Sri Krishna feelingly told, 'I will sincerely endeavour to bring about peace between the Kurus and the Pandavas. Great is the merit earned by him who liberates the earth from the mess of destruction. Lest the inimical persons blame me of not exercising my good offices, I have come hither. If without sacrificing the interests of the Pandavas I can bring about peace among the parties, my conduct will be regarded as highly meritorious'. Sri Krishna's honest counsel did not bear fruit because (a) the Kurus were adamant in their resolve to fight and refused to hear anything in the interest of the Pandavas, (b) they grew into fanatical war-mongers and were determined to come out victorious against the seemingly less powerful Pandavas and, (c) the destruction of the Kurus seemed to be providential.

In the war, Sri Krishna asked his powerful Vrishni army to fight for the Kurus but he himself sided with the Pandavas. In the critical hours of the war, he devoted his whole attention to one cause viz. to bring victory to the Pandavas. None but Sri Krishna was acquainted with the weak points of the enemies and with this knowledge he could easily bring about their downfall. The war saw the strategic display of many weapons dangerous in action. It was Sri Krishna's ingenuity which rescued the Pandavas from their destruction.

In-between these periods, before and during the war, humanity was blessed with the celestial song — the Gita, sung by Sri Krishna to his dearest friend and disciple Arjuna. One is to ponder a little over the possibility of such a highly metaphysical discourse on philosophy being delivered on the eve of a grim war. Moreover, should we think that fightings and killings are the only teaching one is to learn from the Gita since it was immediately followed by a fierce war?

What is taught in the Gita has its own immortal and independent bearing irrespective of Kuru-Pandava story. The Gita is a philosophy of life — a message eternal — the *mokṣa sāstra* par excellence which is revered and held in high esteem by posterity. It teaches man's duties in his thorny course through life. Its import is fraught with the reconciliation of the ideal and the real, the eternal and the temporal, the secular and the spiritual. Nowhere Sri Krishna is seen so much effective in his approach to the aspirations of people at large as he is in the Gita. In it we find both the concrete example of the prophet and the abstract ideal of his message being united in a harmonious blending, bestowing peace and beatific vision. And what came out from his lips are, by virtue of their deep spiritual import, benedictions to the future generations.

To analyze this point further we should carefully observe with what conviction and boldness Sri Krishna dealt with the foremost problems of life. In the Gita he delivers a message which resolves a critical moral problem. In it a message of peace and solace is

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accompanied by a message of manliness and strength, not by passivity and timidity. It exhorts man to be inspired with the ideal of faith and fearlessness, with self-reliance and independence. In a typical moment of despair and desolation which cast a dark shadow on Arjuna's mind Sri Krishna admonished him for yielding to the spell of unmanly weakness which is unfit even for an ordinary *kṣatriya*, what to speak of a hero like him. He inspired him to rise to the occasion, view the situation from the standpoint of Dharma and fight for the promotion of universal good.

While advising Arjuna in this way Sri Krishna was mindful of a higher ideal of life which was spiritual (*Mokṣa*) to the core. The world and the *jīva*, both movable and immovable are permeated in and through by the Spirit. The reality is immanent but also transcendent. The being of the world depends upon that of reality but not the reverse. While *jīva* is essentially of the nature of Brahman, *jīvahood* is a creation of *avidyā*. Hence *jīva* is a product of both *cit* and *acit*, spirit and matter apparently — really he is only existence, knowledge and bliss absolute. In this latter state, the state of *sthitaprajña*, he is without affection for any side, he does neither rejoice nor loathe when he obtains good or suffers evil.

Thus two ideals of life, one subordinate to the other, have been propounded in the Gita. One may be called the ideal for the ordinary man, by virtue of its socio-political status and association, the other, the spiritual ideal because it is concerned with the supreme goal. The scope of the latter is all-comprehensive because it is concerned with the *summum bonum* of life. The four-fold division of caste that is seen among men in society is not due to limitations imposed by man but due to the innate difference in human tendencies and temperaments. Being endowed with respective duties enjoined in the different stations of life one may pursue the ideal fit for his nature with utmost zeal and earnestness for the fulfilment of his aspirations.

Two distinct attitudes towards the world coupled with two kinds of fruits of action have been put forth in this connection. One may devote oneself to obligatory duties with an uneven mind, conjoined with the possibility of success or failure. Even if duty is done in this attitude, one need not shirk one's responsibility. Sri Krishna encourages Arjuna to plunge into the fierce fight which will give him the fruit of action either way.

hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṁ jitvā vā
bhokṣyasé mahīṁ.

Dying thou gainest heaven; conquering thou enjoyest the earth. (*Gita*, II. 37)

But Sri Krishna really prefers duties to be accomplished in a disinterested way — in a spirit of worship to the omnipotent Lord. For it is the only way to transcend the fetters of mind and matter and to attain to highest perfection. Herein lies the fulfilment of Dharma-ideal. It ultimately leads to Jñāna in which alone lies liberation, due to purification of the mind.

sukhaduhkhe samé kṛtvā lābhālābhau
jayājayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivaṁ
pāpamavapsyasi.

Having made pain and pleasure, gain and loss, conquest and defeat, the same, engage thou then in the battle. Thus shalt thou incur no sin. (*Ibid.*, II. 38)

tasmāt asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma
samācara
asakto hyācaran karma paramāpnoti
pūruṣaḥ.

Therefore do thou always perform actions which are obligatory, without attachment; — by performing action without attachment one attains to the higest. (*Ibid.*, III. 19)

naiṣkarmya siddhiṁ paramāṁ sannyā-
senādhigacchati.

He attains by renunciation to the supreme perfection consisting of freedom from action. (*Ibid.*, XVIII. 49)

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In this ideal the world is viewed from the transcendental standpoint and so is negated as transitory and illusory. God alone is held to be real. So He becomes the sole refuge and sheet-anchor.

anityaṁ asukhaṁ lokaṁ imaṁ prāpya bhajasva māṁ.

Having attained this human birth in this transitory and unhappy world, worship Me.

(*Ibid.*, IX. 33)

Having mentioned the supreme ideal, Sri Krishna elucidates in various ways how the ideal is to be reached. He enunciates the different yogas, the yogas of work, of devotion, of knowledge and of psychic control. Looking down upon one's own duties and giving preference to those of others is considered not only to be derogatory but sinful. Duties in themselves do not differ from one another qualitatively since they originate from the difference of aptitude and are not based on merit. All actions are the product of ignorance and hence are mixed up with evil. He alone crosses the veil of delusion who sees inaction in duties, by strictly adhering to ethical and religious disciplines in a spirit of detachment. Such a person attains to *Brāhmī-sthiti.*

A new horizon of spiritual ideal opens when one hears the benedictory words of Sri Krishna in his message of hope and promise in the Gita.

sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vrja
ahaṁ tvā sarva pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā suca.

Relinquishing all *dharmas*, take refuge in Me alone ; I will liberate thee from all sins ; grieve not. (*Ibid.*, XVIII. 66)

In the Gita, Sri Krishna gives a correct interpretation of the Upaniṣadic thought. The Gita is a concretised Upaniṣad and Sri Krishna is the embodiment of the Upaniṣadic ideal.

RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

(*Continued from the September issue*)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

PRANAYAMA

IT is the controlling of the vital force of the body. After posture has been won, we control the motion of exhalation and inhalation. *Prāṇāyāma* consists of three modifications (*recaka*) exhalation, (*pūraka*) inhalation and (*kumbhaka*) retention. These three are regulated by place, time and number either long or short. By place is meant that the *Prāṇa* is fixed at a particular part of the body. The *Prāṇa* is held in this way for some time ; or sometimes this process is repeated at shorter or longer intervals. This awakens the *kuṇḍalini.* Such a practice removes the coverings or obstacles to light or knowledge and enables the mind to have concentration.[30]

But let us understand the philosophy of *Prāṇāyāma.* It is not the control of breath but of *Prāṇa.* As a matter of fact breath owes its existence to *Prāṇa. Prāṇa* is the omnipresent and all-penetrating existence. Vivekānanda says : 'The sum total of all forces in the universe, mental or physical, when resolved back to their original state is called *Prāṇa*'.[31]

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30 Y. S. II—49, 50, 51, 52, 53.
31 *Rāja Yoga*, p. 25.

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Ākāśā is essentially present in every material existence, because it is all-pervading. But the thought of giving *ākāśa* a certain form comes from *Prāṇa*. Therefore, from thought down to the lowest physical force, everything is the manifestation of *Prāṇa*. Once we control *Prāṇa*, we control everything in the universe. The whole universe has a general principle — *Prāṇa* — working behind it and if we control it, then everything physical or mental, can be easily understood by us. According to Vivekānanda, the whole scope of *Rāja Yoga* is really to teach the control and direction, in different planes, of the *Prāṇa*.[32]

The cosmic force — *Prāṇa* — when individualized is called *kuṇḍalini*. *Prāṇāyāma* arouses the *kuṇḍalini* which rests in the *mūlādhāra*. Thus, the pent-up force in the individual is the same as the cosmic power.

The lowest end of the *kuṇḍalini* is called *mūlādhāracakra* while the highest is termed *sahasrāra*. These two are joined by the spinal cord which contains many layers. The uppermost is *suṣumnā*, while the interior most is *brahmanādī*; the alternatives being *brajā* and *citriṇinādī*. The right side of *suṣumna* is *pingalā*, the left one is *idā*. Situated on the *suṣumnā* are the six *cakras*, viz., *mūlādhāra*, *svādhiṣṭhāna*, *maṇipura*, *anāhata*, *viśuddha* and *ajñā cakra*. The *kuṇḍalini*, when awakened passes through all these *cakras*, and during this process many wonderful powers are attained by a yogin.

It is beyond doubt that the different glands, both duct and ductless, situated on or about the spinal cord have a very important function to perform in keeping the body fit. A slight irregularity in their working will sometimes cause incurable diseases. A diseased body can never be fit for the ordinary business of life, not to say of yogic exercises. The pituitary gland controls the brain while *anāhata* (the cardiac plexus) controls the heart. Every gland has an important function to perform. *Prāṇāyāma*, by arousing the *kuṇḍalini* enables all these glands to give out enormous strength. When the *kuṇḍalini* is aroused it brings about super-consciousness and power to perform miracles. But the practice of arousing the *kuṇḍalini* should be done under the guidance of an expert *guru*; otherwise, instead of doing good, it may do enormous harm.

PRATYAHARA

Pratyāhāra means taking back or checking the outgoing powers of the mind and, thus, freeing it from the thraldom of the senses. If the outgoing nature of the sense-organs is controlled, we have gained mastery over them. Instead of ourselves being the machines, recording outside facts, we bid the sense-organs to experience whatever we want.

DHARANA AND DHYANA

When the *citta* is confined and limited to a certain place or object, it is *dhāranā* (Y. S. III-1). It is a development which succeeds *pratyāhāra*. If we have controlled our nervous system completely by *prānāyāma* and *pratyāhāra*, then alone, can we concentrate our mind on a particular ideal, or object of our meditation. And when there is a constant flow of knowledge towards the object, it is called *dhyāna* (Y. S. III-2).

SAMADHI

Patañjali defines *samādhi* as a state of *citta* when, in contemplation (*dhyāna*), the meaning alone of the object of meditation shines forth and nothing more remains, and the *citta* is, as it were, emptied of itself (III-3). An act of contemplation requires the presence of the subject who contemplates, the object contemplated upon and the contemplation. In *saṁprajñāta samādhi* there is the consciousness only of the object contemplated. The subject and the contemplation become identical with the object-to-be-contemplated. In this kind of *samādhi*, according to Vijñānabhikṣu, 'the object of meditation is properly perceived, i.e. directly cognised; that is to say, it is the

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

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inhibition of all functions of the mind save the one related to the object of meditation'.[33]

Saṁprajñāta samādhi is of four kinds, viz. with *vitarka*, with *vicāra*, with *ānanda* and with *asmitā*. *Vitarka* and *vicāra* have been further subdivided as *savitarka* and *nirvitarka*, *savicāra* and *nirvicāra*. Vijñānabhikṣu considers these names as 'merely technical, conveniently applied to the different forms of realization',[34] resulting from the inhibition of the functions of the mental-stuff. These kinds are in the form of the steps of an ascending staircase. Ascending from one to the next step requires a greater control of the *cittavṛttis*. It shows that mental functions cannot be, all at once, inhibited, and that by gradual practice alone, we can enter into the highest Subtle Essence.

In *savitarka samādhi*, there is a clear perception of an object, say a jar, as a gross element. It implies that there is the perception of the elemental substances. A jar contains the gross elements. So, the perception of the jar means the perception of these gross elements. There is a fanciful notion which creates a sense of unity in word (jar-name), object (jar-object) and idea (idea of a jar). In *savitarka*, there is the contemplation of the object. When the fanciful notion of the unity of word, object and idea disappears, then it is *nirvitarka samādhi*

A jar contains the subtle forms which are present in the causal form in a jar, viz. *tanmātrās*, etc.

When there is a direct perception of these various subtle forms of the jar by means of meditation, it will be *savicāra samādhi*. But, how can we have the perception of subtle forms through meditation on a gross body like a jar? Vijñānabhikṣu answers this thus: all gross bodies (jar etc.) of the form being the effects of the twenty-six principles are connate or co-substantial with them, for the simple reason that there is no difference between the constituent cause and its products.[35] Hence subtle perception is possible. Gross forms always disappear but the subtle forms are always present. He says, 'When the subtle perception of subtle things from primary or rudimentary elements upto the primordial matter (prakṛti) takes place', it is called *savicāra samādhi*. It is accomplished by the apprehension of the emanations of each of the subtle elements. But when such an apprehension is not there, it is called *nirvicāra samādhi*.

(*To be continued*)

[33] *Yogasārasamgraha*, edited by Jha (T.P.H.) p. 9.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The first page serial *Pancadaśī* has been transferred to an inside page for this month.

Swami Vimalananda, a scholar in English and Sanskrit, is an ex-Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*.

'Āḷvārs and Their Song-Effusions' is by Sri K. Seshadri, a (Retired) Professor of Philosophy, Madras.

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta is Reader in Philosophy in the Patna University.

'Definition and Function of Philosophy' by Sri N. Satyanarayana is the concluding portion of the article. The first part appeared in the last month.

Sri G. Ramakrishna is an Assistant Professor of English, Dr. Ambedkar College, Mahad, Kolaba Dt.

Br. Vidya Chaitanya is of the Ramakrishna Order.

'Raja Yoga — Restated' by Prof. Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore, is the fourth instalment of the series.

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REVIEWS AND NOTICES

VEDANTA OR THE SCIENCE OF REALITY: By K. A. Krishnaswamy Iyer with a Foreword by Dr S. Radhakrishnan. Revised by Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati. Pub.: Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur, Mysore State. Price Rs. 20. Pp. 44+543.

The book under review was first published in 1930 and after 35 years, it has now been revised by Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati who in his earlier years was a student under the author. The first edition was hailed as a work of great erudition and research and scholars felt that the author had vindicated Sankara Vedanta from a fresh angle of vision. In his learned Introductory Remarks the Swami discusses the special features of this work and draws our attention to one or two points on which the author has not sufficiently 'kept pace' with Sankara and Gaudapada. But this does not in any way minimise the importance of the work which is not a mere treatise on Advaita Vedanta but the exposition of a creed in which the author has identified his whole being.

The book has 25 chapters and the first part, which seems to end with chapter 14, is devoted to discuss the central problem of the Ultimate Reality, Brahman, Pure Being, Pure Bliss and Pure Consciousness. The comparative study that we find in the second half of the book is very learned and illustrates in an ampler way the tenets of the Advaita Vedanta. The absurdity of solipsism according to the author is corrected by the Vedantic view which affirms that the ego is one of degree, the highest being all-inclusive and being Reality itself. The *a priori* nature of space and time, propounded by Kant, if pushed to its legitimate issues should land us in Vedanta. The objections to Vedanta by Mackenzie are examined in great detail by Mr. Iyer and he concludes that the method of Vedanta alone can lead to the discovery of absolute truth uncontradicted by empirical sciences. He also discusses the relevant philosophical doctrines of thinkers beginning from Descartes and ending with Hegel and Schopenhauer. Hegel's criticism of Hinduism and the defects in his system are criticised ably and the criticisms of Stace regarding Maya and the doctrines of the Upanishads are met very effectively by the author. He includes even Whitehead, Croce and Gentile in his comparative account and points out their defects with a great amount of clarity and originality. One may not agree with all that he says regarding these philosophers but one may feel that the author is in the right in trying to prove the superiority of the Vedanta system in this context.

However, the main interest of the book lies in the first half in which the author elucidates the nature of the Ultimate Reality. His appeal is to the method of *avastatrya* in which we take into account not only the waking state but also the dream and deep sleep states. He discusses at great length that Vedanta is founded on reason, intuition and experience. As we read the work we have a conviction that the author is not a mere text-book writer but one who has the vision and experience of what he writes. The treatment of Maya is highly illuminating though he criticises the traditional theory that Maya is also the positive principle of creation. Maya is nothing but the innate contradictions inherent in life and he illustrates this by giving 36 points, a consideration of which he says will make us feel that Maya is nothing mysterious and unnatural. Incidentally he suggests that the problem of One and the Many vanishes when we consider that the One applied to Reality has a different significance from that of empirical life.

A good understanding of the fundamentals of Advaita is made possible by regarding Vedanta as a science based on common life and experience and this is the chief merit of the book. The book must be read from cover to cover and is indispensable for a correct comprehension of the Advaita Vedanta as adumbrated by the great Sankara.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ASIA: By Jean Herbert. Translated by Manu Banerji. Pub.: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, London. Price 42 sh. net in United Kingdom only. Pp. 410.

The motto given in the first chapter may be said to guide the aim of this work by Jean Herbert who was himself a teacher of Asian religions and mythologies and who has a first-hand knowledge of the culture, manners and customs of the several Asian countries he describes in this book. As he says, it is not enough to describe a society as it is; we must also see why and how it has become what it is. Hence the necessity for the detailed study of Asian society in all its complicated patterns.

The book has 19 chapters divided into four parts, viz. (1) Man and God, (2) Man within the Universe, (3) To Man from Society, and (4) the Work of Man. In the second chapter, the author gives a general account of Asian religions emphasising religious practices like meditation, temples, pilgrimages, ritualism etc., while in the third, he discusses religions of antiquity like Zorastrianism, Mithraism and Judaism and also Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism. In the fourth chapter under the interesting title 'Syncretism', we are given an account of the mixing of the concepts and the rites of the several religions. The author's treatment of topics like Space, Time, Causation, logic and symbolics is not metaphysical but is correlated to the several strands of the Asian life and is more a discussion of the meaning of these terms in the East. The third part is devoted to family, morals, social relationships and foreign policy while the last part takes up economics and law, education and science and technology and art.

This book is on the whole very instructive and a patient reading of it will give us a knowledge of the very complicated and complex tangle of life in the East. The treatment is in a sympathetic strain which will enable the European to understand the mentality of the Asian and to shed his

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prejudices against the latter. The author is amply justified in his expectation that the book will lead to a better understanding of the Asians with a view to mutual respect and benefit.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

MAHATMA GANDHI, Vol. I. THE EARLY PHASE: By Pyarelal. Pp. 854. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Price Rs. 25.

This is a biography of immense worth and value, which deals with the first phase of Mahatma Gandhi's life and mission magnificently planned and executed with incredible wealth of industry and research. The author was not exactly a 'Private Secretary' in the conventional sense of the term; nevertheless he had been one who was privileged to be his lifelong associate and devotee. His hero was no ordinary mortal. He was a 'sthitaprajna', — 'calm in the midst of storm, awake when others were asleep, alert to danger when on the surface all seemed fair, anguished by the sufferings of others but indifferent to his own, with a relentless drive for self-denial and self-purification, all the while radiating a strange serenity and peace that transformed everything'. (P. 10).

Lives of great men of the stamp of the Mahatma, could hardly be divorced from the events and conditions that had prevailed before their advent. This is especially apposite in the case of Gandhiji because much, if not the entirety of his achievements in the various spheres, as well as his own gospel of truth and non-violence, his unshakable faith in the will of Providence for every step that he had taken, not to mention his vows and fasts, could not be appraised correctly, without studying the contributions made by those whom the author rightly characterises as 'Pathfinders', as well as the contemporary trends and events both in India and Africa. The Mahatma had supplied as it were the coping stone to the huge structure of Indian unity and nationhood: 'the foundations had already been well laid by the various social, political and religious leaders in the country who had included not only the members of the highly intellectual blue-blooded aristocracy but also a simple, unlettered, plebian soul, like Ramakrishna Paramahamsa' (P. 79).

Gandhiji had been able by his soul-force to transform millions of his countrymen and women from a life of ease and luxury to one of suffering and privation. The author has admirably indicated (P. 80. P. 101) how the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda had permeated the ideals which Gandhiji had set before himself; and he has furthermore supplied a very cogent narration of the main events in the life of Sri Ramakrishna and his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda (Pages 65 to 105).

Gandhiji had been profoundly influenced in his boyhood by the austerities and vows of his mother. Even as a boy, he had taken a meaningful view of life (P. 207): to him 'brahmacharya' was only another form of Sannyasa. He had early cultivated the habit of subjecting religious and social usages to the test of reason; and it was this trait of his that ultimately led him to agitate against untouchability (P. 217).

While in England he was straining every nerve to spread the cult of vegetarianism and of plain living. Curiously enough it was there that he was to take to the Gita (259), and realize the value of religious experience: 'seeking God's grace in utter humility and nakedness of spirit' (286). It was again after hearing a few sermons in the church and reading Carlyle and Mrs Besant's work, that he had completely rid himself of atheism (260). Likewise it was in South Africa that he had become convinced of the 'perfectability of all religions' (261). His acquaintance with the Jain businessman C. Rajchandra had been a turning point in his life (275), which ultimately led to his pursuit of 'satya and ahimsa' in fresh fields and pastures new (278).

Naturally enough, the author has devoted a very major portion of his work to Gandhiji's work and experiences in South Africa. The reader will find therein, much that is new and much that is graphic. He had gone there for a living, but inscrutable were the ways of Destiny. To the subject races in that sub-continent, he had given a new life and a new technique, which had later progressed into a world movement with vital benefits for the whole of mankind. Service of community and political work became his absorbing passion.

It was in Africa that he had come into contact with the writings of Count Leo Tolstoy, and they indeed had moulded his life, and even day to day routine (P. 645). The author has dealt with the life and philosophy of the Russian savant (P. 626 to 708), and that really is a valuable part of this biography. Gandhiji was essentially a Hindu, but he had drawn inspiration for his *satyagraha* movement from the writings of Tolstoy, John Ruskin and Thoreau.

Gandhiji was essentially a man of religion, with Ram-nam ever on his lips. Indeed it could be said that he was a religious savant who had practised politics at intervals. It is interesting to hear of the books that had influenced him. He had doubtless the *Gita* to start with: later he was initiated into the *Upanishads* and treatises on Islam and sayings of Zarathustra. He was no less influenced by the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Though he did not practise its discipline, he had little doubt about its value in releasing the 'infinite energy imprisoned in the soul'. It had its own influence in his passion for 'aparigraha'. He came to regard riches as things 'to be kept at arm's length'; for he said, if one 'bestowed glances on them, they would slight him'. This was itself, the author says, a paraphrase of a commentary on an aphorism in the Yoga Sutra (730); and it was no wonder that he had prized both for himself and his followers, a vow of voluntary poverty (730).

This book is a priceless addition to world literature. The index is a marvel of compression and condensation.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

FAITHS OF MAN: Encyclopedia of Religions (Three volumes): By J. G. R. Forlong. Pub.: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. Pp. 1,744. Price: $25.50.

This new edition of General Forlong's work has more of historical than scholastic interest.

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When it first appeared (posthumously) in 1906, the science of comparative religion was still in its infancy and the freedom with which the author handled subjects relating to Christian Religion and his approach of sympathy to the non-Christian faiths raised a good many brows of disapproval in the West. Since then frontiers of knowledge have extended, the human mind has widened a good deal and today we are able to look with indulgence upon the efforts of well-meaning scholars like the present author to grasp ways of thought and life alien to their own.

The author of this extensive work has evidently done his best to understand and present the various concepts — philosophical and religious — in the different traditions as objectively as possible. But he has been influenced by the general climate created by the Orientalists of the last century, viz. Max Mueller, Colebrooke, etc. and shares their lofty ignorance. The entry on Yoga for instance includes this explanation: '*Yoga-nidra*' or 'sleep of union' has been truly called 'delusion'; and the Yogi, self-deceived and stupefied with *bhang* or other narcotics, imagines himself possessed by the energy of the God whom he adores, being entranced in Maha-Maya or 'the great illusion' ... a Yogi also means a 'spy, a violator of truth and confidence (Benfy), and our experience of yogis justifies this definition.'

This is a typical note on Indian subjects. Even on many other topics of broader interest, the writing is naturally out-of-date, heavily coloured as it is with the smug mental attitude and exploded beliefs of a bygone age.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE BOOK OF TEA: By Kakuzo Okakura. Published by Dover Publications, Inc., New York. Pages: 76. Price: $1.00.

One of the notable pioners of Asian renaissance in the early years of this century, Baron Okakura was not only an art critic but himself an artist — in Letters and in Matters of the soul. *The Book of Tea*, which has run into several editions, is a celebrated classic worthy of its great author.

This slender book not only gives a delightful account of the birth and growth of the institution of the Tea ceremony in China and Japan, but presents the cultural and philosophical background which it is indispensable to understand for an adequate appreciation of the ceremony. Dr Okakura describes how Teaism is a fine transcription of Zennism in terms of sophisticated culture. He analyses the different constituents of the ceremony, viz: the building, the garden, the path, the materials used for the bowls, the kettle, the paintings, the flowers that are part of the scheme and shows their parallelism to the main concepts of the Zen thought.

The chapter on flowers is a veritable poem in prose and moves the reader to a melting identity with the plant creation in the universe. His description of the method of plucking the flowers which the Japanese have developed into almost a spiritual art makes one realize how inhuman man normally is in his dealings with these tender creatures in God's world of beauty.

The writer's comparison and contrast of the attitudes in the East and the West to art in general — man's and nature's — is very instructive.

A work to be slowly sipped and made part of one's being.

M. P. PANDIT.

ETHICAL PHILOSOPHIES OF INDIA: By I. C. Sharma. Revised and edited by S. M. Daugert; Pub.: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, 40, Museum St., London. Price 42 sh nett. Pp. 374.

That India has no ethical philosophy as such and any ethical discussion in India is more or less accidental, has been the charge against Indian philosophy from Western thinkers. The book under review is an effective answer to this criticism. It proves conclusively that Indian ethics is based on metaphysics and at the same time is thoroughly practical, well-suited to the society and motivated by the ultimate goal of *mukti*. The author points out that from the Vedic times onwards there has been a steady continuity of ethical life derived from the monistic metaphysics and pervading the entire empirical world of space and time thus acting as a counterpoise to the monistic metaphysics. The concept of Rita is the foundational basis and this makes morality derive its ultimate sanction from this principle or order. Mention is made of the four *purusarthas* and the *ashramas* and their *dharma* in the Vedas themselves.

The book has a large sweep including nearly a span of 4,000 years and ends with the "realistic idealism" of Nehru. Each epoch is carefully expounded and the treatment of the subject is very fair and clear. The author shrewdly exposes several fallacies in the popular and prevailing accounts of Indian philosophy. One such example is that there is a progressive evolution in the thought of the Vedas from polytheism to monotheism and from monotheism to monism. The author has refuted this very effectively and has argued that there is neither polytheism nor henotheism in the Vedas. He is very right in pointing out that usually the Brahmana literature is completely ignored by scholars as being merely ritualistic. But as the author points out the multiplicity of the gods is merely the names of the various processes and is represented by the heavenly bodies. It is also clear that there is no revolt by the authors of the Upanisads against the ritualism of the Vedas, as we are constantly told by writers with a Western bias. The author clarifies the *varnavyavasta* (caste system) and explains how this ethico-social structure gradually changed from the metaphysical stage to the ethico-psychological and finally became ossified into the traditional. The ethical systems of the Charvakas, the Jains and the Bauddhas are explained and the author next takes up the ethical systems of the Darsanas. The chapter on the Mimamsa ethics is probably the most instructive and it corrects many misapprehensions about that system. Dr. Sharma explains clearly why the Mimamsakas took as their theme Dharma or duty as enjoined by the Vedas. He argues carefully that Karma Mimamsa is not in any way opposed to Advaita and that the usual way of regarding it as inferior to the Vedanta is wrong. He explains the meaning of the terms *jnana* and

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vijnana and concludes that Mimamsa and Vedanta are not only complementary to each other but are the two aspects of the same reality. The contention of Mandana Misra regarding *jnanakarma samucchaya* is nothing perverse or watering down of a fundamental. The Mimamsa does not repudiate ordinary morality but gives it its proper place in Mimamsa ethics. The author's considered conclusion may be quoted in his own words: "Mimamsa does not repudiate knowledge of the underlying non-dualistic spiritual reality, or Brahman, nor does the Advaita view set aside *upasana* and *karma* activity". He devotes a full section to the interdependence of Mimamsa and Vedanta and then discusses the ethics of Sankara. It is only at the highest stage that the distinctions of the knower and the known and the doer and the act vanish. Non-recognition of duality at any lower level would amount to foolishness.

After dealing with the ethics of the Gita, the author next discusses contemporary ethics as taught by Tagore, Radhakrishnan, Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. These four are very interesting chapters and they give us an inkling of what he regards as the best contribution of each of these four. The concluding chapter is on a par in its interest with the previous chapters and here are discussed topical questions like the ethical implications of communism and capitalism *versus* communism. The book is substantially informative and is very learned and where it differs from the conventional views, it is always in the right. Every student of philosophy should carefully study this book.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

FRENCH

LE BOUDDHISME JAPONAIS: Textes Fondamentaux: Translated by G. Renondeau. Publishers: Editions Albin Michel, Paris. Pp. 315. Price: 19.20 Fr.

At one time Buddhism in Japan was dominated by the Tendai and Shingon sects. But in the 12th and the 13th centuries a number of new sects sprang up and, in consequence, three principal tendencies established themselves in that religious movement. They are the great *Amidist* sect, the *Zen soto* sect and the sect of *Nichiren* based upon Sutras of the Lotus of the Marvellous Law. The texts selected and translated in this volume are basic works of these three sects. Their value to students of Buddhism cannot be underrated.

The brief Preface by M. Renondeau serves as a very informative introduction to the texts.

M. P. PANDIT.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, PATNA

REPORT FOR 1964-65

The normal activities of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Patna are: (1) Religious, (2) Educational and Cultural and (3) Medical. Scriptural classes numbering 240, were organized during the year both in and outside the Ashrama. The Ashrama was conducting a U.P. School in which there were 218 students at the end of June, 64, when its management was taken over by the Patna Municipal Corporation.

The Ashrama has a Students' Home in which there were 24 inmates of whom 12 were free, 3 partly free and 9 paying. Of the 21 students of the Home, who appeared in various University examinations during the year, 19 passed.

Swami Turiyananda Library and Free Reading Room of the Ashrama had 7,338 books. 8,539 books were issued during the year. The reading room received 8 dailies and 54 periodicals. The Dispensary run by the Ashrama treated 55,153 cases in the Homoeopathic Department in which 5,946 were new. The Allopathic Department treated 40,000 cases including 5,824 new.

The Ashrama also collected Rs. 2,129.00 for the relief of East Pakistan migrants.

The Managing Committee offers its grateful thanks to all subscribers, donors, friends, sympathisers and other contributors for all their help.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, SALEM

REPORT FOR 1964-65

The activities of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Salem are twofold (i) spiritual-cultural and (ii) humanitarian. The Ashrama conducts regular classes on Sundays on the *Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavata*, *Mahabharata* and on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda are also celebrated.

The Ashrama has a Library with a select collection of books in various languages. The total number of books at the end of the year was 1,262. These books and journals are made use of by the local friends and devotees.

The Charitable Dispensary, conducted by the Ashrama, treated 31,014 cases of which 16,854 were new. It has a surgical ward with six beds.

During the period under review the Ashrama and Dispensary were put to much inconvenience for want of adequate funds. The management offers its grateful thanks to all donors, benefactors, sympathisers and friends for giving all help and requests them to continue their help.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, CHERRAPUNJI

REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1959-1964

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Cherrapunji, conducts the following activities at different places: At Cherrapunji: (1) The Ashrama; (2) A High School; (3) A Technical Section

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attached to the High School; (4) A Students' Home; (5) Three Nursery and Primary Schools; At Sohbar: (1) A Middle English School; (2) A Junior Basic School; (3) A Students' Home; (4) A Technical Section attached to the Middle English School; At Shella: (1) An Ashrama; (2) A Library and Reading Room; (3) A Community Hall; (4) A Middle English School; (5) A Nursery and Primary School; At Nongwar: (1) A Middle English School; (2) A Nursery and Primary School; (3) An Adult (Night) School; (4) A Hostel for Boys; At Laitduh: (1) A Middle English School; (2) A Nursery and Primary School; (3) A Hostel for Boys; At Wahkaliar: A Middle English School. It also runs a M. E. School and a Nursery and Primary School at each of the following places: Mawkdok, Laitdiengsai, Nongkynrih and Wahlong; and a Nursery and Primary School at each of the following places: Mawsahew, Laitryngew, Laitmawsiang, Ryngimawsaw, Laitlyndop, Ladmawphlang, Swer, Umblai, Mawmluh, Mawsmai, Mawkma, Mawrah, Laitkroh, Mylliem and Mawshamok.

The Ashrama at Cherrapunji has a small shrine and a prayer room. On every Sunday 'bhajan' and religious classes are held for the benefit of such students as are willing to join. Birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are celebrated, when devotees from Cherrapunji and other places take part in them enthusiastically.

Matriculation results from 1960-1964 of the High School at Cherrapunji were:

Year	No. Appeared	No. Passed
1960	33	26
1961	34	24
1962	29	20
1963	27	24
1964	36	26

On 1st July, 1964 all the schools under the management of the Ashrama had a total strength of 2,128 (boys and girls) on their rolls.

The Students' Home at Cherrapunji had 109 boys on its roll at the end of the period under review, of which 100 were granted concession. Attached to the Ashrama and the Home is a Goshala (dairy) with 65 heads of cattle. The yield is about 20 seers of milk which is used for the Home.

The management offer their hearty thanks to their numerous donors, subscribers and well-wishers who have helped them all these years with their financial and moral support and appeal for funds to raise a Reserve Fund of Rs. 3,00,000 to bridge the gap of financial crisis they are facing every year.

VEDANTA SOCIETY, CHICAGO, U.S.A.

SWAMI VISHWANANDA'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

[Swami Vishwananda was a disciple of Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj. He joined the Organisation in 1920, and took orders from Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj in 1923.

He was sent to Chicago in 1937, where he became the head of the Chicago centre after the demise of Swami Gnaneswarananda. On Sunday the 25th July, 1965, at 11-30 p.m. (U.S.A. time) he passed away in a hospital in Chicago where he was admitted for a conjestive heart failure. —Ed.]

A memorial service honouring the late Swami Vishwananda was held at the Vivekananda Temple located at 44 East Elm Street in Chicago, on September 12, 1965, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Swami Bhashyananda, the new Swami-in-Charge, presided over the impressive service. The function began with the opening prayer and invocation to all the saints and seers of the world. It was a moving occasion. The Temple was filled to capacity with people sitting on the stairs inside the chapel and overflowing into the streets. Swami Vishwananda had won the love and reverence of those who had had the privilege of knowing him. In the hearts of his disciples he had left an imperishable image of unselfish love and dedication. When a record of the departed Swami's voice — singing a song in the 1940's — was played, many were the eyes flooded with tears.

In his opening speech, Swami Bhashyananda outlined various new important projects he had in mind for the Vedanta movement in Chicago. He also described how Swami Vishwananda had loved this Center and the devotees and how he had fought death to the last minute. The new Swami added that he was sure Swami Vishwananda would be helping in this work, much more now because he had overcome the impediments of the body. The Swami then introduced Swami Sarvagatananda of the Ramakrishna-Vedanta Center in Boston, Reverend Thomas Rogers, Minister of the Episcopal Church and Dr. Edmund Perry, Professor of Comparative Religion at Northwestern University. Swami Sarvagatananda narrated many interesting reminiscences and incidents in the life of Swami Vishwananda, bringing forth the latter's highly spiritual personality. Father Rogers said that Swami Vishwananda had given him not only the joy of his teaching but also the gift of the Bhagavad Gita, and that the late Swami had enlarged his life. Dr. Perry, in his very impressive written speech, brought home to the congregation in most touching terms his association with the late Swami and the immense spiritual benefit he derived from this contact. He also said that Swami Vishwananda had been a constant source of inspiration in his life.

The president then concluded the proceedings after summarizing the speeches of the three guest speakers. In his final remarks, he observed that Swami Vishwananda had truly served the Chicago public through his concrete monastic life. At the end he added that it was his confirmed conviction that spiritual living — rather than mere interpretation of the Scriptures — has always been the most powerful source of inspiration to the devotees. He proposed a vote of thanks for the guest speakers and the congregation, and with his concluding prayer this short but touching function came to its close.

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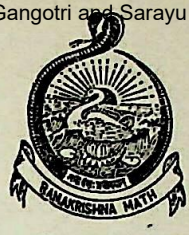

. . . Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LII DECEMBER 1965 No. 8

PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

जातिव्यक्ती देहिदेहौ गुणद्रव्ये यथा पृथक्। वियत्सतोस्तथैवास्तु पार्थक्यं कोऽत्र विस्मयः ॥७१॥

Jāti-vyaktī, species and individual; *dehidehau,* the spirit and the body; *guṇa dravyé,* quality and substance; *yathā,* just as; *pṛthak,* different; *tathaiva,* likewise; *viyatsatoḥ, ākāśa* and Reality; *pārthakyaṁ,* difference; *astu,* let there be; *atra,* here; *vismayaḥ kaḥ,* what wonder is there.

71. Just as the species and the individual, the spirit and the body, quality and substance, though always perceived inseparably together, are different, similarly let there be difference between *ākāśa* and Reality. What impediment is there in accepting such a concept?[1]

[1] It is as natural as the other concepts cited above: that is the meaning.

बुद्धोऽपि भेदो नो चित्ते निरूढिं याति चेत्तदा। अनैकाग्र्यात्संशयाद्वा रूढ्यभावोऽस्य ते वद ॥७२॥

Bhedaḥ, the difference (between *ākāśa* and Reality); *buddho 'api,* though known; *citté,* in the mind; *nirūḍhiṁ,* conviction; *na yāti cet,* if not gained; *tadā,* in that case; *té,* your; *asya,* of this difference; *rūḍhyabhāvaḥ,* the absence of conviction; *anaikāgryāt,* due to multiple pointedness (of the mind); *saṁśayādvā,* or due to doubt; *vada,* tell.

72. If you ask as to why one does not attain conviction in the difference between the *ākāśa* and Reality though one knows about it in one's mind, then tell us why there is this absence of conviction in this regard i.e. is it due to your multiple-pointed (scattered) mind or due to doubt.

अप्रमत्तो भव ध्यानादाद्येऽन्यस्मिन् विवेचनम्। कुरु प्रमाणयुक्तिभ्यां ततो रूढतमो भवेत् ॥७३॥

Ādyé, in the first instance; *dhyānāt,* by concentration and meditation; *apramattaḥ bhava,* be vigilant; *anyasmin,* in the latter case; *pramāṇa yuktibhyāṁ,* by proofs and reasoning; *vivecanaṁ kuru,* ponder deeply; *tataḥ,* by that; *rūḍhatamaḥ,* of the most determined type; *bhavet,* will be.

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73. In the first instance (i.e. if the mind is multi-pointed) become vigilant by meditation; in the second case ponder deeply over the proofs and reason[1] (in support of the proposition). Then will your mind be of the utmost conviction.

[1] Proof and reason as stated above in verse 67.

NOTE: What is the gain in being able to distinguish between *ākāśa* and Reality? That is being stated in the next verse.

ध्यानान्मानाद्युक्तितोऽपि रूढे भेदे वियत्सतोः। न कदाचिद्वियत्सत्यं सद्वस्तुच्छिद्रवन्न च ॥७४॥

Dhyānāt, by constant meditation; *mānāt*, by proofs; *yuktito 'pi*, by reason also; *viyatsatoḥ*, between *ākāśa* and Reality; *bhedaḥ*, difference; *rūḍhé* (*sati*), gets confirmed; *kadācit*, ever; *viyat*, *ākāśa*; *satyaṁ*, (is) an independent entity; *na*, not; *sadvastu*, Brahman; *chidravat*, of the nature of space; (*na*) (*bhavati*) *ca*, (will not) happen.

74. By such constant thought, by the pondering over the proofs and reasons advanced, the difference between *ākāśa* and Reality gets confirmed, with the result that it is never possible afterwards to mistake either *ākāśa* as an independent entity or Brahman to be of the nature of space.

ज्ञस्य भाति सदा व्योम निस्तत्त्वोल्लेखपूर्वकम्। सद्वस्त्वपि विभात्यस्य निच्छिद्रत्वपुरस्सरम् ॥७५॥

Jñasya, to a wise man; *sadā*, ever; *vyoma*, *ākāśa*; *nistatvollekha pūrvakaṁ*, convincingly as an unreal entity; *bhāti*, appears; *asya*, to that wise man again; *sadvastvapi*, Brahman also; *nicchidratva purassaraṁ*, as without any space; *vibhāti*, shines.

75. For a wise man the *ākāśa* then appears convincingly always as unreal and Brahman too shines as without any space in It.

वासनायां प्रवृद्धायां वियत्सत्यत्ववादिनम्। सन्मात्राबोधयुक्तं च दृष्ट्वा विस्मयते बुधः ॥७६॥

Vāsanāyāṁ, when the impression; *pravṛddhāyāṁ*, waxes strong; *budhaḥ*, the wise one; *viyatsatyatva-vādinaṁ*, one who argues that *ākāśa* is a real entity; *sanmātrābodhayuktaṁ ca*, as also those who have no knowledge about the Reality (which has no space in it); *dṛṣṭvā*, seeing; *vismayaté*, wonders.

76. When this impression (of the unreality of the *ākāśa* and of the reality of Brahman) waxes strong the wise one wonders when he sees those who argue that *ākāśa* is a real entity, as also those who have no knowledge of Reality which is spaceless.

एवमाकाशमिथ्यात्वे सत्सत्यत्वे च वासिते। न्यायेनानेन वाय्वादेः सद्वस्तु प्रविविच्यताम् ॥७७॥

Evaṁ, likewise; *ākāśa mithyātvé*, when the unreality of *ākāśa*; *sat satyatvé ca*, as also the reality of Brahman; *vāsité*, has firmly taken root; *anena*, by this same; *nyāyena*, process of reasoning; *vayvādeḥ*, from air and other elements; *sadvastu*, Brahman; *pravivicyatāṁ*, separate.

77. When this unreality of *ākāśa* and reality of Brahman have firmly taken root in one's mind then by this same process of reasoning one should separate Brahman from air and other elements.

(*Continued on page* 343)

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WHAT DOES TAKE MAN AWAY FROM GOD

INDIAN psychologists of old were aware that man's senses were not infallible, nay they were definite that the senses were easily fooled by Dame Nature. They knew that something stood between us and the thing experienced and made us perceive them in a different state. In the *Sāṅkhya Kārikā* we come across a passage where the author enumerates the several reasons due to which man cannot perceive objects. These same reasons may be given as to why we see the world not as it is but in quite another way. The passage runs thus: 'Due to extreme distance, extreme proximity, deformity of the receiving senses, an unreceptive mind, subtlety, veiling, suppression and becoming one with what is similar, non-perception is possible'.[1] We can in the light of scientific discoveries add some more reasons for our not being well posted with the exact situation we are in. Take the natural phenomena, for example the rising of the sun. According to science the expression itself is faulty. Science says that the earth moves round the sun as also on its own axis and therefore, the days and nights, the months and seasons result. But the common man's idea of rising and setting of the sun is naive, not in consonance with the scientific explanation, yet it is in vogue. Similarly man — aver the scientists of the soul, the Rishis, the saints — does not see himself as what he truly is. The sublime experience of these sages was that the one Brahman has become all these: our own self, these creatures and all that is seen in the universe. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says: 'It (Brahman) thought, let Me be many'.[2] Again, 'this same deity thought that let Me entering into these devatas (viz. fire, water and earth) by means of the living self, (*jīva*) manifest as name and form'.[3] There are many passages in the Śruti which assert this type of relation between the Jīva and Brahman or God.

The question now is why do we not perceive this relation. What prevents us from experiencing it? This has been the quest of philosophers and seers through the ages and this is the real purpose of religion: to find out who we are, from whence we came and where we go. The Advaitin will tell you that it is due to *avidyā*, ignorance that you see variety in unity, and *avidyā* has been variously described. Sri Ramakrishna has given us a simpler definition of this *avidyā*. He used to say egotism in man is *avidyā*. Another time he said it was lust and lucre. It stands between us and God. Now a doubt may arise: Is then this *avidyā* more powerful than God as to come between Him and us? The answer has been given by Sri Ramakrishna himself. He says, 'It is not so. Even a tiny thing can veil a great object'. He cited the example of the sun — which we know is very much larger than the earth itself — which can be prevented from being seen by a flying piece of cloud. Can we on that account say that the cloud is more powerful than the sun. The cloud owes its very existence to the sun and not the other way about. An effect can never be greater than the cause. Sri Ramakrishna further drove home this truth by holding a piece of cloth between himself and the audience. He said, 'You cannot see me now because of this veil. Such is *avidyā*, such is the nature of egoism'. It hides the true nature of the world and even of oneself.

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[1] अतिदूरात्सामीप्यादिन्द्रियघातान्मनोऽनवस्थानात् ।
सौक्ष्म्याद्व्यवधानादभिभवात्समानाभिहाराच्च ॥
— *S. K.*, 7.

[2] तदैक्षत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति ।
— *Chandogya*, VI. ii. 3.

[3] सेयं देवतैक्षत हंताहमिमास्तिस्रो देवता अनेन
जीवेनात्मनानुप्रविश्य नामरूपे व्याकरवाणि ॥
— *Ibid.*, VI. iii. 2.

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II

How can we overcome this egoism? If we have to proceed scientifically, first of all we must know what it constitutes. The Upaniṣads speak of the Jīva as endowed with the five sheaths, the *pancakośas* — the *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya* and *ānandamaya*. The very idea that these are termed sheaths shows that they are not the real thing. We know the scabbard is not the sword, it is but a receptacle for the sword. Likewise these *kośas* are not the self, not the Ātman. But as the scabbard is a necessary accoutrement for the carrying of the sword, so these *kośas* are necessary for the purpose of transit of the soul through the world of experience back to its own nature.

The above *kośas* are sometimes regrouped and named as the *sthūla* (gross), *sūkṣma* (subtle), and *kāraṇa* (causal) bodies. The *annamaya kośa* is the gross visible body; the *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya kośas* constitute the subtle body and the *ānandamaya kośa* forms the causal body. In this regrouping or reclassification though the word sheath has been dropped, the substitute used, viz. *sarīra*, body, has not much more respect in Indian philosophy than the word sheath. Sri Krishna in the *Gītā* likens the body to a garment. 'Just as man discards the worn-out garments and puts on other new ones, similarly the *jīva* (*dehī*) discarding the old and decrepit bodies takes on other new ones.'[4] There is the *śarīrī*, the dweller in the body, for whom the body is the house. A house is not built for its own sake, nor for mere architectural beauty, but for some one who wants a habitation. By itself it has no value. Only because someone dwells in a house it is worth all the trouble and the labour and the cost. Likewise the body is worth less than the dust of which it is made as soon as the indweller leaves it. Yet such is the infatuation, that the indweller identifies himself with the body and forgets himself. This superimposition of the insentient body on the conscious entity (the self) and vice versa, i.e. the admixture of truth and falsehood is the natural basis, says Śri Śankara, of all the transactions in this world.[5] Not to know about this is what constitutes ignorance, and identification of oneself with any of the three bodies above cited is what is called the ego (*ahaṁkāra*).

The range of this ego is very vast. As if not satisfied with the embellishments of these bodies it takes on new ones. There are the *upādhis*, the limiting adjuncts which further cramp our soul when it gets attached to them. There is scholarship, and there is wealth. There is name and fame, property and progeny. If these *upādhis* are not properly used they are sure to use man improperly. Instead of the dog wagging the tail, the tail will wag the dog as the saying goes. Each one of this is enough to swell the ego to infinite proportions and when such a thing happens there remains but very small space for the Ātman to occupy, for God to manifest. For by whatever name we call that Conscious Principle, according to our leaning towards Advaita or Dvaita, it has to be accepted on the grounds of authority of Śruti and Smriti that this Principle lives in man. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says, 'He who lives in all beings but is within them, whom no beings know, whose body is all beings and who controls all beings from within, is the Internal Ruler, that is your own immortal self'.[6] 'The Lord, O Arjuna, dwells in the heart of all beings

[4] वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥
— *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 22.

[5] सत्यानृते मिथुनीकृत्य अहमिदं ममेदमिति नैसर्गिकोऽयं लोकव्यवहारः ।
— *Br. Sutra Bhashya*, Introduction.

[6] यः सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन् सर्वेभ्यो भूतेभ्योऽन्तरः, यं सर्वाणि भूतानि न विदुः यस्य सर्वाणि भूतानि शरीरम्, यः सर्वाणि भूतान्यन्तरो यमयति, एष त आत्मान्तर्याम्यमृतः । — *Br. Up.*, III. vii. 15.

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and makes them move by His power, Māyā, as if mounted on a machine,'[7] says Sri Krishna. Even such a Being we are neglecting and accumulating tinsel and burying ourselves into the heap of scrap to such an extent that for all practical purposes the Ātman in us sinks almost into insignificance. As someone referring to the Upaniṣadic passages, humorously said, 'because of man's preoccupation with the other things of the world the Ātman has entered into a very secret place and hidden Itself[8] in the smallest space in the heart.[9] It is afraid to be seen by unholy eyes'. What happens by this process of increasing our accretions is that the thickness of the veil that we project between ourselves and God increases, until it becomes too opaque for us to have any glimpse of Him. It takes the shape of a wall, a barrier too thick to penetrate.

An impressive example as to how the ego of wealth acts was given by Sri Ramakrishna. He said, 'If a thief steals ten rupees from a rich man's house and is caught, the owner exclaims, "what to steal from my house!" First he takes away the stolen money, gives the thief a good beating and not satisfied with that hands him over to the police'. Why does this happen? Because the rich man had identified himself with his wealth. That is the ego of wealth. Sri Krishna describes this as *āsuri sampat*, demoniacal traits in man, thus: 'This I have acquired now; this desire I shall soon have; this wealth is mine, the other also will soon become mine. That enemy of mine I have already killed and shall slay others as well. I am the Lord; I am the enjoyer; I have attained everything that can be coveted, am powerful and happy. I am richly endowed with wealth; I am of noble birth; who else is equal to me? I will perform sacrifice; I shall give gifts; I shall sport'.[10]

III

How to overcome this ego that prevents us from seeing God? The Upaniṣads prescribe the method of discrimination. What is it that sees and perceives things in this world? It is the Conscious Principle, the Ātman that perceives, whereas in the world it is believed that the aggregate of the mind, senses and body is the seer, is the experiencer. 'That which is the ear of the ear, mind of the mind, speech of the speech, it is the vital force of *prāṇa*, and eye of the eye. The wise man distinguishes It from these faculties and rising above sense-life becomes immortal,'[11] says the *Kenopaniṣad*. From this it is clear that it is not the eye that sees, but that which keeps the eye alive; it is not the mind that thinks but that which keeps the mind alert. And that resides in all beings and makes them live, move and have their being and that is God. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* affirms this stand tirelessly and denies experience to every other faculty or entity. 'Realizing the One, which sees the things that are in the dream and things that are in the waking, as the Great Omnipresent Being, a wise man does not grieve.'[12] The meaning is obvious. That which is in us and takes note of things in the waking state as well as in the dream, that is the Omnipresent Being, God. And realizing it as such one does not have any sorrow. As another Upaniṣad remarks, 'Where is infatuation, where is sorrow for him who sees oneness everywhere and knows that his Ātman alone has become

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[7] ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥
—*Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 61.

[8] गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं । —*Kathopanishad*, II. 12.
Also गूढोत्मा न प्रकाशते —*Ibid.*, III. 12.

[9] अथ यदिदमस्मिन्ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुंडरीकं वेश्म
दहरोऽस्मिन्नंतराकाशस्तस्मिन्यदंतस्तदन्वेष्टव्यं ।
— *Chandogya Up.*, VIII. i. 1.

[10] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVI. 13 to 15.

[11] श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मन यद्वाचो ह वाचं
स उ प्राणस्य प्राणः । चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः
प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ।
— *Kenopanishad*, I. 2.

[12] स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येनानुपश्यति ।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ।
— *Kathopanishad*, IV. 4.

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all beings?'[13] It is very near to us, yet very far.[14] It is very far for those who get engrossed in the world. They have to travel a long distance before they can reach or see Him. But it is very near to those who have discrimination, who know that it is God alone that exists in so many forms. For them it is there inside every being as well as outside of them.[15] When these ideas are repeatedly forced upon the mind and when it learns to assimilate this fact and make it its own, be one with that idea, then man has made some progress towards his ideal, towards God.

But this discrimination is to be preceded by the discrimination of what is real and what is unreal. First we have to discover, we have to ask ourselves whether riches, the outward possessions — name and fame — are they real? Then comes what we most prize, the body. Is that eternal? No it is not. Now when we say that one thing is ephemeral, something of an opposite nature is accepted as existing always. So there is something eternal compared to this existence. Man clings to things here because they are tangible to him and he thinks he can hold on to them. But when he comes to know the true value of things he longs to reach a more permanent abode. He hears about the enjoyments in heaven and seeks for them as they are more lasting than those on the earth. But that is not the goal. The heaven is only this world of senses multiplied, a thousand or million fold if you like, but when the enjoyments in heaven which were earned through merits of actions done here, come to an end, as the merits are exhausted, there comes the fall. Therefore the seers advise that even heaven is not the goal. So one who hankers after peace and true immortality, should see God, seek the knowledge of Brahman. Such a person should have intense dispassion for enjoyment here, and hereafter. When for a long time, without let or hindrance, ceaseless efforts are made in this direction then the knowledge of the Ātman dawns, then the ego dies its natural death. It has no more power to bring one back into this world. For the fruits of action, which bring man into being, are then completely burnt out.[16] They become impotent to fructify, to bring about a further birth for that person just as the fried seed is unable to germinate.

IV

Now this path can be followed by very few chosen persons. Their number is a microscopic minority. What is the way for the common man? Sri Ramakrishna says, 'This ego is like the peepal tree, very difficult to get rid of. Cut it down today, tomorrow again it puts forth its shoot. So let this intractable ego remain like the servant. Then it cannot do you any harm. "I am the servant of God." This ego is not harmful'. But then one has to serve the devotees of God and learn from them the way to reach Him. Such a man's riches are put to the service of the Lord and His devotees. He may give in charity but that does not inflate his ego. On the other hand he is happy that he has been the instrument in the hand of God to serve His creatures. It is the Lord that commands him and he is there only as His servant. When one can truly cultivate this attitude one gets rid of one's unripe ego, as Sri Ramakrishna calls it. The ripe ego either knows that everything is Brahman, everything is from God, and lives in Him, or that it is only His servant and as a servant cannot pride himself on the achievements attained through him by his Master, the Lord, this ripe ego too has nothing to show off and therefore remains meek and subservient to God's will. These are the two ways of overcoming the ego. In this case of surrender, of remaining as a servant, what we

[13] यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोह कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥
—*Isavasya Up.*, 7.

[14] तद्दूरे तद्वन्तिके । —*Ibid.*, 5.

[15] तदंतरस्यसर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः । —*Ibid.*

[16] ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ।
—*Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 37.

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call, *Karma yoga* also plays a great part. Men have to work, completely effacing their egos, and without the least idea of any return. It is only for the pleasure of the Lord that they have to work and not to claim any rewards therefrom. Such a man's mind should always be plunged in God to know His will and act up to it. Bhakti or devotion does not free man from his obligations in the world. Rather they make him fulfil these obligations more conscientiously and meticulously than before. Thus doing every thing for God, establishing one's mind in Him, bowing down to Him and fully dedicating oneself to Him, one is able to tear down the veil of this ego and stand before His resplendent presence.[17] This is the way for going back to Him from whom for a short while we have the feeling that we are separate. This experience is like the divided appearance the ocean presents when a stick is floating on it, while all the time it is one and undivided. Such is the nature of the ego. Penetrating and knowing it as such, we go beyond it and reach Him.

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[17] मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ।
—*Ibid.*, IX. 34.

PANCADAŚĪ

(*Continued from page* 338)

DOUBT : As *air* is the effect of *ākāśa* and as there is no identification of it with Reality what then is the necessity of distinguishing *air* and other elements from Brahman ? Though there is no immediate relation between *air* and Reality there is a distant one, says the author.

सद्वस्तुन्येकदेशस्था माया तत्रैकदेशगम् । वियत्तत्राप्येकदेशगतो वायुः प्रकल्पितः ॥ ७८ ॥

Māyā ; *sadvastuni*, in Brahman ; *ekadeśasthā*, resides in a part ; *tatra*, in that Māyā ; *viyat, ākāśa ; ekadeśagaṁ*, occupies only a fraction ; *tatrāpi*, even in that (*ākāśa*); *ekadeśagataḥ*, occupying a small space ; *vāyuḥ*, air ; *prakalpitaḥ*, is projected.

78. Māyā dwells in a part of Brahman ; in this Māyā a small portion is occupied by *ākāśa* and air has but a small fraction in this *ākāśa*.[1]

[1] Therefore the method of separation of these elements from Brahman has its own use. For ultimately all these elements have come out of Brahman and reside in it as the Upanisad says :

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति । *Taittiriya Up.* : 3-1.

शोषस्पर्शौ गतिर्वेगः वायुधर्मा इमे मताः । त्रयः स्वभावाः सन्मायाव्योम्नां ये तेऽपि वायुगाः ॥७९॥

Śoṣasparśau, drying up and touch ; *gatirvegaḥ*, movement and speed ; *imé*, these ; *vāyudharmāḥ*, traits of air ; *matāḥ*, are said to be ; *san-māyā-vyomnāṁ*, of Reality, Māyā and *ākāśa ; trayaḥ*, three ; *svabhāvāḥ*, natures ; *ye*, those which ; *te 'api*, they also ; *vāyugāḥ*, are inherent in air.

79. Drying up and touch, movement and speed these are said to be the essential qualities of air. Further, the qualities or traits of Reality, Māyā and *ākāśa* also are inherent in it.[1]

[1] What these qualities are and how they exist in air is being described next.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(Continued from the previous issue)

How strict Lātu Maharaj was in matters of accepting charity from anyone is well illustrated by the following incident : One day he went to Entally (in Calcutta) to beg something of a devotee there. But when the devotee offered money, Lātu Maharaj felt some scruples in accepting the amount. Patal Babu noticed it, and when alone, put this question to him, 'You came to beg, Maharaj, how is it you returned the money ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Did you not notice that he was tipsy ? When a man is drunk and not in his normal consciousness one should not accept any gift from him.'

Patal Babu : 'Why, Maharaj ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Now he is not in his senses. When he will return to his senses he might say, "The rogue has cheated me of the money when I was not myself". So one should be careful about it.'

Patal Babu : 'Maharaj, you think so much before accepting charity from anyone.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'You know, it is like this : If a gift comes along with love and reverence then only is it acceptable, then only can I take it. A Sannyasin should not accept anything that comes out of unwillingness or pride. In such cases both the parties, one who gives as also one who receives, are blameworthy and incur demerit.'

Another incident regarding this topic : One day the present writer (Sri Chandrasekhar Chattopadhyaya) placed a few coins near Lātu Maharaj's feet and bowed down to him. 'Hardly had I got up when Lātu Maharaj said, "You see, I have no need of money at present. You better keep those coins with you, they may come to be of use to you". I said, "No Maharaj, I won't take them back". Lātu Maharaj insisted and said, "You will need this money in a couple of days. I say, you take this money back". To my surprise I found I needed the money'. In three days the writer was involved in a matter in such a way that he had to use the same money.

Yet another incident : It indicates Lātu Maharaj's qualities of forgiveness and protection to those who had taken refuge in him. At that time a building for the use of Lātu Maharaj was under construction at Varanasi and for that purpose a sum of Rs. 500/- was kept in Lātu Maharaj's room, and this money was one day stolen. Lātu Maharaj knew who had stolen the money but he said nothing. A devotee from Calcutta came to know of this and pressed Lātu Maharaj to hand over the man to the police. But Lātu Maharaj said, 'It is true he could not resist the temptation and stole the money ; but I have taken him under my protection ; will it look well if I now hand him over to the police ?'

Another illustration of his forgiveness we give below : This incident took place at Balaram Babu's house. One day a man, dead drunk, came and started abusing a devotee, at which the latter's friends got annoyed and were about to beat the man. Lātu Maharaj intervened and said, 'Just mark the difference : he is drunk and he abuses ; and you are not drunk and you abuse. Tell me who are to be punished. You want to beat him, is it not ? Drunkenness has already given him a severe beating. What more can you add to that ? Drunkenness has taken away his consciousness and conscience. What greater harm can befall that man ? Is physical punishment greater than that ? Is he really alive, that poor man ?'

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Whether before Sannyasa or after, Lātu Maharaj used to avoid women as far as possible. While at Balarambabu's house, he did not like talking with women devotees. One day a lady devotee came to him and expressed her earnest desire of hearing about the incidents from the Master's life. This lady was an attendant to Holy Mother and a Master's disciple. Lātu Maharaj told her, 'Why, the Holy Mother is there in this house. Please go in and hear direct from her mouth'. At this she said, 'Today I have come to hear of the Master from your lips, Maharaj. Please don't disappoint me'. Lātu Maharaj repeated, 'Go to Mother, she will fulfil your desire'. Still the lady disciple did not appear like leaving the place. Lātu Maharaj became very grave and gave her the third warning: 'What sort of a devotee are you? I am telling you again and again to go to Mother and you are still sitting here!' At this the lady said, 'Sarat Maharaj has sent me here to hear about the Master from your lips and therefore am I imploring you. Still you are so inexorable as that. Am I so mean, such an object of hatred?' What Lātu Maharaj's reaction to it was we do not know. But he said to the lady, 'I do not know why Sarat has sent you to me. I will bring this matter to Raja. If he orders I will narrate. If I don't get his orders, even if the heavens fall I will not speak to you'.

Then turning to the writer who was seated nearby he said, 'Let us now go to Rakhal, let her remain sitting here'. And we came to Raja Maharaj. The moment Raja Maharaj saw him he cried out, as if in surprise. 'How is it, brother Lātu, you have come without invitation? Other days we don't get any response even after repeated calls!'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Just see, that lady (mentioning her name) is creating trouble there. I told her again and again to go to (Holy) Mother, but she would not hear. So I came away to you.'

By that time the lady too came there. Seeing her Raja Maharaj said smilingly, 'Why did you go to his room? Perhaps Sarat sent you there. Whatever it be don't annoy Lātu Maharaj in that way. Harm will befall you'.

Since that day the lady never came to Lātu Maharaj in Balarambabu's house. After this event some used to call Lātu Maharaj a woman-hater, which in reality he was never. For ladies he had great regard, though he did not like to be in their company, for long. Once he told Mrs. Chatterji of Baghbazar, 'You are all favoured of God. He has given you ladies infinite patience — there is no limit to your patience. You bear with all indignities and inequities. How grand is that!' The present writer heard it with his own ears.

On another occasion Lātu Maharaj told some devotees, 'You see, some people beat women. Never raise your hands against them. You do not know how much they bear — they are forbearance itself. If in spite of that you beat them where will they go? They are parts of Mother Universal. If the Mother is insulted Lord is displeased. Your progress and prosperity lie in pleasing them. Their tears will bring ruin on you, as Sita's did to the whole race of Ravana'.

One day Lātu Maharaj told Patal Babu, in the course of a walk, 'Don't think women are weak. They are not as you take them to be. They are parts of Mahamaya. How will you be able to cope with them? Just look there at the betel-shop. That lean and thin stick of a woman has kept three wrestler-like men pinned to the ground, as if by a spell'.

Lātu Maharaj would caution men, specially monks to be wary of women. He would say, 'Monk, beware of them. Attraction for women is the most dangerous obstacle in the spiritual path. If once you fall a prey to this, you cannot make any spiritual progress; you are stuck up in the quagmire of worldliness. Wherever they are, there all troubles raise their heads. . . . Beware, if they once cast their snares you are done for, for the whole life. In fact men willingly walk into their traps. . . . So *sādhus* must be careful not even to look at them'.

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The above instruction of Lātu Maharaj was meant more for the *sādhus* than for the householders. When he found a *sādhu* going to a lady's house, though noted for her devotion to God, Lātu Maharaj warned him with the following words : 'I know the lady. She is very good. Still you must not forget that you are a *sādhu*. There are several instances of fall of *sādhus* by keeping company even of good women. Their devotion to God and *sādhus*, later on turns into something too bad for *sādhus*. Having crossed the seven oceans and thirteen great rivers (as they say it in Bengali, i.e. far more dangerous obstacles) *sādhus* are drowned in mere mud-puddles. A monk should not mix with women too much even if they are good devotees. . . . The Master used to say, "When a man sees a serpent he prays, 'Mother Manasa, do hide your head and show your tail (i.e. keep away from my path);' so the moment a sadhu sees a woman he should not look up to her face but down to her toes and call her mother. If you do that you are safe. That is the saving mantra against all your passions". You know the story of Lakshmana. Though he lived with Rama and Sita for so many years he never looked at her face but always at her feet'.

These are indeed invaluable instructions to all, especially to monks and *brahmacharins*. But this does not prove that he was a woman-hater. These are words of warning for the good of both men and women. Without hating women, he wanted good of both, men and women.

One day a householder devotee raised the above topic and said, 'Maharaj, we have often heard you talking about not looking at the face of a woman. How is it possible for the householders like ourselves? Are we then done for? How can we go on without women?' At this Lātu Maharaj replied, 'Why are you mixing up the two ways of life together — that of a Sannyasin and of a householder? There is no harm for the latter to mix with women. But the monk's way of life is much harder. "For a monk", Master used to say, "to think of woman and money is as bad as the foul smell of the body of a beautiful woman. Just as that smell obliterates her grace and beauty, so those desires of a *sādhu* wipe out all his noble qualities."

The devotee : 'Your words send a shock through our spine. We have married and are rearing a family. Is there no hope for our salvation? Are we fallen for ever?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Why so? You are householders. Perform the duties of a householder and you reach the goal of that life. Has not the Master asked you to live the God-ward life of a householder? If you do so, you are sure to reach the goal, i.e., realize God, even if you live with women in the manner he recommended.'

The devotee : 'What is meant by a God-ward life of a householder?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Ah! That is the God-ward life of a householder, where every member of the family, men, women and children, try to see God in this life. He (Master) used to say, "In this world there are '*vidyā-stris*' and '*avidyā-stris*'. '*Vidyā-stris*' are those women who lead men Godward and '*avidyā-stris*' are they who take them away from Him".'

The devotee : 'How are we to know a "*vidyā-stri*" from an "*avidyā-stri*"?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'That is not very difficult. A *vidyā-stri* has less anger, and other passions; she sleeps less, eats less, her passions are under her control. She is loving and devotional, she is bashful and modest. She serves all in the family, as if she is the mother of all. And she prays to God to bestow on her husband (and other members of the family) His grace. She does it without letting others know of it. She is extremely frugal of expenditure, so that her husband will not have to work harder for more money, and that he can devote more time to prayer, meditation, etc. You will see, a *vidyā-stri* arranges everything in time for her husband's prayer, meditation, for service to deities and saints; and secretly makes charity so that the husband may get dessert therefrom.'

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The devotee : 'That is a luck, Maharaj, very few are favoured with.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'That is true. Those alone who did enough works of merit in previous births get such wives ; others have to suffer with *avidyā-stris*. What else can they expect ?'

The devotee : 'What you say, Maharaj, is quite true, but very depressing. What are they to do who have *avidyā-stris* ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'There is a way out — to pray earnestly to the Lord every day, "Lord, give us good understanding, save us from your world-bewitching Māyā, vouchsafe unto us your grace ; may we work heart and soul to reach out to you".'

When Lātu Maharaj was residing in Varanasi, one day a gentleman came from Calcutta. The moment he arrived Lātu Maharaj took him severely to task. He said, 'Your wife is such a good lady, and what an unmitigated scoundrel you are ! Leaving her alone and worrying you have come away here. What prevented you from telling her that you meant to come here ? She would not have, I am quite sure, forbidden you to come here. Write a letter to her just now that you are here'. The gentleman was taken aback and understood that Lātu Maharaj could read one's hidden thoughts.

One day Rajkumar Banerji of Ahiritola came and told Lātu Maharaj with much contrition and humility, 'Maharaj, we are worms, being crushed by worldliness. Can we not be saved ? Is there no way out for these unfortunates ? Are we destined to be drowned in the filthy waters of this well of worldliness ? Be a little gracious on us, lift us up from this well'.

Lātu Maharaj calmly heard these words and softly said, 'You see, man cannot help man. There are two, only two, who can do it — Satchidananda — God in the shape of Guru and Satchidananda God Himself. You have already got a true *guru* ; why are you worrying then for your future ? When you have got such a *guru*, you have secured a safe haven ; your life's boat will surely come to it in proper time. Realization of God is only a question of time. Have patience'.

Rajkumar Babu : 'It will come in time — this faith I have. But I doubt if it will come in this life itself.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Don't allow such doubts to assail your mind. Doubts and misgivings are the deadliest enemies in the spiritual path. They loosen the foundation of faith.'

Rajkumar Babu : 'It is not for nothing that doubts are assailing me ; even the words of the Guru I fail to carry out, I have become so mean, debased, and despicable. It seems this life of mine is blasted. This body serves me no purpose.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'What makes you so hopeless as that ? Have you understood the entire purpose of this life ? In this imperial court of the Lord no injustice can ever be done anywhere ; no life can ever go in vain. Once Śaśibhai (Swami Ramakrishnananda) gave a very apt reply to one like you. That gentleman spoke almost in the same language as you. Brother Śaśi said, "Suppose you are going somewhere ; on the way you come across a small open drain. You come back eleven or twelve steps, then run forward and jump over the drain. Tell me if the few steps backward were necessary for his forward progress or not. It is like that". Perhaps in one life a man has to take some backward steps, to play his role well in the eternal life. In the next life he will have to run with much greater speed. No life can ever go in vain. But remember one thing well — you must live the life fixing your eyes ever on the Lord. He will then lead you as He likes. Whatever is really necessary at any time will be supplied in exact quantity. He knows man's past, present and future. So the best thing a man can do is to resign himself unreservedly unto Him.'

Thus did Lātu Maharaj put courage into the despaired hearts of his devotees. How many times did we hear him repeat these words : 'Whether you catch hold of the Lord's hand or not, He has caught yours, there is not the slightest doubt about it — so great is His grace

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and mercy for all'. He never allowed his devotees to get hopeless. To put hope and cheer into the hearts of the depressed was his very breath of life. He would say, 'If you feel it difficult for you to catch hold of the Lord's feet because you have not seen Him, then do one thing, catch hold of one of his devotees. That is as good as holding fast to Him. Their prayer the Lord never rejects... You have seen the Master, you have seen Swamiji; you know the ideal lived and preached by them. Keep it bright before your eyes and live the life'.

Biharibabu said one day, 'Maharaj, can the Master and Swamiji be ideals for all?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'What do you say? The Master is the ideal for all. He is an ideal *Sannyasin* and an ideal householder; an ideal Guru and an ideal disciple. He is the ideal for all faiths, all sects. He is the ideal for the followers of *tantras*; He practised and reached the culmination in all the *sādhanas* laid down in all the important Tantric books. He is an ideal *Vaishnava*: Such devotion for Sri Hari cannot be found anywhere and he realized Hari. He is an ideal *Śaiva*: He realized Śiva too. He is the ideal of the devotees of Sri Rama: He realized Sri Rama and Sri Sita. He is the ideal for the Vedantins as well: He reached the culmination of the Vedantic *sādhana*, the Nirvikalpa samadhi, in one day. He is the ideal for the Christians and Mussalmans also: He had the vision of Christ and the Prophet. He is the ideal for all, for he is the only one who practised the *sādhanas* of all faiths and reached the ideal preached by each.'

(*To be continued*)

HOLY MOTHER SRI SARADA DEVI

K. P. SAROJINI

WHILE paying our humble tributes to the hallowed memory of Sri Sarada Devi it would be of immense benefit to all of us, to recall to our minds the many incidents in her life demonstrative of her greatness and her divine nature. The meaning which her life has for us cannot be over estimated. Aptly described as Sri Ramakrishna's final word on the ideal of Indian womanhood, her immaculate life was a unique synthesis of all that is pure and noble in womanhood of all times, everywhere. At a time when we had lost faith in our great traditions and culture owing to the impact of an alien civilization, her appearance on the Indian scene heralded the dawn of a new era for Hindu womanhood.

Before passing on to her life and teachings it would be in order, to pause for a while, and think as to why her message seems so important today than at any other time. To a careful observer the reasons are not far to seek.

A distressing feature of our present life is the failure of parents and our modern system of education, to impart to young minds the necessity of living upto certain fundamental values in life. As a result, there are no standards left in the younger generation either to mould their thinking, or discipline their actions or even to instil some purpose into their lives. Religious feeling is rudely shaken by the growth of technology and industry. The values of life are interpreted solely in terms of material considerations. Even the large majority of people who are conventionally religious, are carried away more by mere forms and not the essence.

The modern notion is that religion and God are not real needs, and that it is only the unsophisticated, who look forward to having a spiritual side to life. People who tend to think this way and who have little roots in our culture, would be surprised to learn the findings from clinical experiments of a new school of

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Psychiatric thought which has its origin in Vienna. They hold that men and women are born with a spiritual urge as strong as their instincts of sex and hunger and the modern suppression of this vital need is the root cause of much of the frustrations and tensions of our day. They call this repression of the spiritual side, the real pathology of the age.

Modern scientific research has shown, what our philosophers and Rishis have always claimed, that without a reasonable degree of mental health, physical health is certain to decline. In the highly industrialized countries of the West, it has been found that even though man's social and economic problems are solved, and all the hurdles to man's bodily well-being overcome, new problems are cropping up. Their first public health problem is mental ill health — manifesting itself as emotional instability and neurosis. This is because the stresses and strains to which the human mind and emotions are exposed, increase at an alarming rate with the rising tempo of life under unfamiliar conditions. It is a lesson for us developing countries in Asia, to maintain our spiritual balance, while adapting ourselves to the needs of a technological civilization.

We have many naive people in responsible positions in this country today, who ignore the spiritual mood which is the soul of India and think that once our economic problems are solved, the Indian masses will have solved all their problems. They are so obsessed with 'progress' and 'dynamism' that they would rejoice to see India becoming a faithful carbon-copy of the West. The net result of all this, is widespread corruption, indiscipline, an astonishing lack of dedication, in all fields of activity, and a decline in public and official morality. What else can be expected when public values are not based on eternal verities? Nobody is against progress and human betterment, but it should certainly not be at the cost of other more important things of life.

From the point of wisdom values, India is today at the lowest point in her history. In this present chaotic condition, women have a significant role to play, because it is they who set the tone to society and bring it to the threshold of meaningful living. It is important to remember that India's strength depends on the spiritual regeneration of her people. The Indian women of today have unparalleled opportunities before them, because there is no walk of life from which they are excluded. But it is a pity, that many of our educated women have not proved themselves worthy of our great heritage. Hence it is the supreme duty of every thinking woman, to see through the superficialities of modern life and by personal example, re-establish faith in some of the age old ideals of Indian womanhood like purity, humility, selflessness and generosity. Who else in our recent history, can provide the inspiration so admirably as Sri Sarada Devi?

Now to turn to her life and teachings: Sarada Devi, or the Holy Mother, as she was endearingly called by the devotees and followers of Sri Ramakrishna, was born on the 22nd December 1853 at the little village of Jayrambati in the Bankura District of West Bengal. Her parents — Ramachandra Mukherji and Śyāmāsundari Devi — were known to be a deeply pious and upright couple. She was married to Sri Ramakrishna at the age of five. The Master who was 23 years old, was at that time living in a state of complete God-intoxication, indifferent to food, sleep and other physical needs, and engaged in various forms of spiritual disciplines. His relatives thought that marriage would bring his mind to a state of normal consciousness and set about finding a bride for him. Sri Ramakrishna assented to this plan and even directed them as to where they would find his bride. Thus was Sarada Devi drawn to play an important part in the unfoldment of the Divine drama that was witnessed in her saintly husband's life.

After the marriage Sri Ramakrishna returned to Dakshineshwar, to resume with greater intensity his extra-ordinary *sādhanas* for the realization of God. Sarada Devi met him again after an interval of eight years and lived with him for a period of seven months. During this time, the Master, conscious of his responsibility

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towards his young wife, who was so utterly dependent upon him, gave her instructions in both religious and secular matters. Nothing was considered trivial or unimportant. The underlying theme of his teachings was that she should conduct herself with dignity and prudence, according to persons, time, place and circumstances. His divine love made such an indelible impression on her youthful mind, that while recalling this experience in later years she used to observe : 'I felt as if a vessel full of divine bliss was permanently installed in my heart. I cannot adequately describe the heavenly joy which filled me'. For Sri Ramakrishna, this was an occasion, to know his young spouse more intimately and he was deeply touched by her purity, simplicity of character and devotion to God. It is said, that she used to look very often at the reflection of the moon in the Ganges and pray that her mind should become pure and more spotless than the moon. Her prayers were certainly answered, for she was an embodiment of purity itself.

Sarada Devi spent the next four years with her parents at Jayrambati. She missed her husband very much and was overcome by an inexpressible sorrow. Meanwhile, reports reached her ears that her husband was turning mad. Her parents were apprehensive, but she, concealing all her grief, avoided strangers and went about her household duties as tranquil and introspective as ever. Knowing no peace of mind, she resolved to go to Dakshineswar and see things for herself. Arriving there on foot, she went straight to her husband's room and was over-joyed by the warmth of his welcome.

Totapuri, who had initiated Sri Ramakrishna into Sannyasa, had once told him that a wife presents no danger to one who is really established in Brahman, for a true seer of Brahman sees no difference between man and woman, being established in the perception of unity, the Self. Welcoming this opportunity to test the authenticity of his realizations, Sri Ramakrishna, far from renouncing her as an impediment to his spiritual life accepted her rightful claims upon him as a wife, and even permitted her to share his bed for nearly eight months. This was a time of great revelation for her, because she came to know the purity and exalted state of her husband, who was very often immersed in the bliss of Samadhi, completely detached from his physical surroundings and without the least trace of carnality. In their earlier days at Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna had once asked her whether she had come to drag his mind down into Maya, to which her prompt reply was that her only aim in life was to help him in the path of God. She lived her life true to these words, which is evident from a remark the Master made a few years later — 'Had she not been so pure, and had she, losing herself assailed me, who knows if my self-control would not have broken down, and body-consciousness arisen? I importunately asked the Divine Mother after my marriage, to keep her mind absolutely free from lust. Having lived with her at that time, I knew that the Divine Mother really heard and granted that prayer'. It was in essence a spiritual marriage, for Sri Ramakrishna's influence began soon to manifest itself in Sarada Devi, who completely surrendered her life to her Divine spouse and awakener.

The Master perceived clearly that women were only different aspects of the Divine Mother. Once while massaging his feet, Sarada Devi asked him as to how he looked upon her. With the disarming frankness of a child he replied : 'The Mother who is the deity in the temple, the Mother who gave birth to me, and the Mother who is now before me, are one. I look upon you in that light — as the embodiment of the Divine Mother'.

Sometime later, when he was fully convinced that the Divine Shakti resided in Sarada Devi he brought his own Sadhanas to a successful conclusion by worshipping her as the Divine Mother according to the scriptural injunctions. In doing this, he followed the rituals of the Tantric ceremony, called Shodashi Puja, which is extraordinary in its spiritual exaltation and in its emotional appeal.

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Thereafter, both the worshipper and the worshipped went into deep Samadhi. For Hindu women, worship of the husband has been a path to God-realization from time immemorial, but nowhere in history has there been such worship of the wife by the husband. But Sarada Devi rightly enjoyed the unique honour and blessing of being worshipped by her husband as the embodiment of Śakti, the Universal Mother.

Her reaction to all this was most remarkable, and proved that she was not lagging behind her Divine husband in her spiritual hankering. She engaged herself in his service as before, like any simple and devoted wife and made rapid strides in attaining self-realization. In her eyes, Sri Ramakrishna was an Incarnation of God himself.

Outwardly speaking, Sarada Devi's daily life was uneventful. She lived in comparative seclusion and her routine at Dakshineshwar began at 3 in the early morning, and like any other housewife, she cooked, tidied the rooms, nursed and served Sri Ramakrishna and his guests. She made herself indispensable to the Master by her unswerving devotion and selfless love. She would visit her village now and then, but most often she was by his side. This spiritual companionship was, however, not to last long, for Sri Ramakrishna was stricken with a fatal illness and passed away on August 16, 1886. She was then 33 years old and his death left a void in her life which nothing could fill. Yet she transcended her great grief, with the firm faith that her husband had not gone away, but had only passed from one room to another.

A new chapter in her life had begun. Sarada Devi outlived the master by 34 years, and during this period, she played the combined role of Guru and mother to the followers of Sri Ramakrishna. Her quiet strength was a moving inspiration, and from now onwards she became the very heart and soul of the Ramakrishna Movement, of which we have every reason to be proud of today. Although the emotional foundations of this Neo-Vedantic mission was laid by Sri Ramakrishna, and given concrete shape and expanded on a global scale by his brilliant disciple Swami Vivekananda, it was the Holy Mother who was responsible for its consolidation through her silent but life-transforming influence.

In the early years of her married life, when her mother lamented that her daughter had been denied the joys of motherhood, by the ascetism of her son-in-law, Sri Ramakrishna had consoled her with the prophecy that although she would have no children of her own, she would in time have many good children who would look upon her as their veritable mother. His words proved true in later years, when she was literally worshipped by all his followers as their own mother.

Her infinite love and absolute self-denial attracted innumerable devotees who thronged to her for advice and consolation. Her spiritual ministration started even during the life time of Sri Ramakrishna who impressed upon her that it was as much her responsibility as it was his, to look after the spiritual destiny of earnest seekers after truth. He clearly foresaw, that she would have to be an infallible spiritual guide after him. In her role as Guru, she became the very embodiment of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, by upholding all religious doctrines and initiating people of diverse classes and beliefs.

Her teachings are simple and sublime. To those who approached her for light and guidance, she would often emphasize the importance of the purity of mind and body, for the realization of God. She would say: 'Everything depends on the mind. Nothing can be achieved without purity of mind. God who is purity itself cannot be attained without austerities. Through a pure mind, one attains knowledge and awakening'.

The Holy Mother was a great believer in the efficacy of Japa, which she would say ought to be done with utmost love, sincerity and a spirit of self-surrender, if we are to understand the Infinite Grace of the Supreme. Stressing the importance of concentration, she would remark: 'Calling upon the Lord once, with the mind concentrated is equivalent to a

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100,000 mechanical repetitions of his name. If instead of that, one goes on repeating his name for the whole day, but with the mind elsewhere, of what good is it? There must be concentration, then alone one attains the grace of God'.

Today when caste and communal loyalties are tearing the country apart, her broad-mindedness and catholicity of outlook would put to shame many of our so-called high caste men and women. She did not deliver sermons on the virtues of equality and tolerance but lived them, as the following incident will reveal. There was a Muslim labourer by name Amjad, who was engaged for some construction work on her house at Jayrambati. One day she invited him over for meals and was stung to the quick, to find her niece, who unable to get over the caste prejudices, was tossing food on to his leaf-plate. To remedy the grave injury that was being done, she quickly took over and served the food herself, and cleaned the place when he had finished eating. When her niece expressed consternation, that she a Brahmin woman should do it, she reproached her for her inhuman behaviour, and firmly replied that Amjad was as truly her son, as Sarat himself (meaning Swami Saradananda).

Another example of her liberal views was her attitude towards the Western disciples, in whose company she felt perfectly at ease. Sister Nivedita was so charmed by this, that she exclaimed 'The stateliness of her courtesy, and her great open mind were almost as wonderful as her sainthood'. On one occasion, when a staunch advocate of *swadeshi*, refused to buy for some member of her household cloth manufactured abroad, she corrected him saying that Westerners were also her children, and she could not be exclusive.

Her sense of compassion was even more striking. When a certain lady of a respectable family went astray, but later, feeling sincerely repentant, approached her for forgiveness and grace, she received her warmly and even initiated her. Another lady devotee who was present objected to this and said she would stop visiting the Mother, as long as the other woman came to see her. The Holy Mother took no notice of all this, and calmly replied, that she was equally the Mother of the good as well as the bad.

Her advice to women was that they should not consider womanhood as a defect or a curse, for it is a God-given opportunity to raise oneself and humanity. The woman fulfils herself in the role of wife, and perfects herself later as mother and their true office is to sublimate man.

Her parting message of universal goodness, is worth remembering, for it is a challenge to mankind. She said: 'If you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others. Rather see your own faults. Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child, this whole world is your own'.

May the Holy Mother bless us always so that we may keep to the path of righteousness and bring pride and glory to our motherland.

My child, this mind is just like a wild elephant. It races with the wind. Therefore one should discriminate all the time. One should work hard for the realization of God. What a wonderful mind I had at that time! Somebody used to play on the flute at night at Dakshineswar. As I listened to the sound, my mind would be extremely eager for the realization of God. I thought the sound was coming directly from God, and I would enter into Samadhi. I experienced the same ecstasy at Belur also. The place was then very peaceful and I was constantly in a mood of meditation.

— HOLY MOTHER.

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THE METHODOLOGY OF THE UPANISADS

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

THE quintessence of Upaniṣadic wisdom is contained in the four great utterances (Mahāvākyas), 'That Thou Art' (*Tat Tvaṁ Asi*[1]), 'I am indeed Brahman' (*Ahaṁ Brahma Aṣmi*[2]), 'This Ātman is Brahman' (*Ayaṁ Ātmā Brahma*[3]) and 'Brahman is consciousness all compact' (*Prajñānaṁ Brahma*[4]). Of these, the first three affirm the essential identity of the finite self (Jīva) with the Supreme Being (Brahman), while the last states the nature of the identical element between them. In their ultimate essence both are nothing but Pure Consciousness. The finite self, rid of its adventitious adjuncts through analysis and elimination, comes to its own and shines as infinite consciousness. This is the transcendence (*abhiniṣpatti*) spoken of in the Upaniṣad[5]. Pure Consciousness is homogeneous. There is no place in it for diversity of any kind (*ekarasa*). It is consequently one without a second in the literal sense of the term (*ekameva advitīyaṁ*). In the absence of any tension arising from lack of fulfilment, it is bliss-all-compact. It is therefore characterized as *sat*, *chit* and *ānanda*.

There are several other statements in the Upaniṣads conveying the same ideas. 'Brahman is real, Brahman is knowledge, Brahman is infinite' (*satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ Brahma*[6]). Knowledge here does not stand for particular knowledge (*vṛtti jñāna*) but for consciousness which illumines all the modes of the mind (*vṛttis*). What is real and infinite may yet be insentient. That is the Sâmkhya conception of Pradhāna. In the statement given above what is real and infinite is said to be a conscious entity. It cannot therefore be the Pradhana of the Sâmkhya. It is the Brahman of the Vedanta. '*Kaṁ Brahma Khaṁ Brahma*'.[7] Brahman is not the ordinary pleasure arising from sense-objects but infinite, unlimited pleasure which is the same as bliss. 'The Infinite is pleasure' (*yo vai bhūmā tat sukhaṁ*[8]). This carries the same sense as the previous statement. 'Who is the Ātman and what is Brahman' (*ko nu ātmā kiṁ brahma*[9]). The two words qualify each other. Ātman qualified by Brahman ceases to be the mere finite self and Brahman qualified by Ātman ceases to be an object of worship external to us. The two words taken together stand for the non-difference between the Ātman and Brahman. 'He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman' (*sa yo ha vai tat paramaṁ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*[10]). The knower of Brahman can become Brahman only if in his essential nature he is already Brahman. One who knows a lamp-post does not become a lamp-post for he is not that. The statement that by knowing Brahman one becomes Brahman is intelligible only on the assumption that the knower is Brahman though he is not aware of it. The statement therefore must be taken as calling our attention to what we are already, 'Whatever here, the same there; whatever there, the same here' (*yadeveha tadamutra yadamutra tadanviha*[11]). This statement, according to Śri Śankara, means that we should consider ourselves as identical with Brahman which is all sentience and which is infinite like space.[12] These six

[1] *Ch. Up.*, VI. viii. 7
[2] *Br. Up.*, I. iv. 10.
[3] *Mand. Up.*, 2.
[4] *Ait. Up.*, V. 2.
[5] *Ch. Up.*, VIII. xii. 3.
[6] *Taitti. Up.*, II. i. 1.
[7] *Ch. Up.*, IV. x. 5.
[8] *Ch. Up.*, VII. xxiii. 1.
[9] *Ch. Up.*, V. xi. 1.
[10] *Mund. Up.*, III. ii. 9.
[11] *Katha Up.*, II. i. 10.
[12] विज्ञानैकरसं नैरन्तर्येणाकाशवत्परिपूर्णं ब्रह्मैवाहमस्मीति पश्येदिति वाक्यार्थः ।

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additional statements convey the same ideas as those crystallized in the Mahāvākyas and serve to reinforce them.

In the Upaniṣads there is no indication to show that the truths set forth above were reached by a process of elaborate reasoning. They are not put forward as conclusions that follow inevitably from given premises. We have therefore to take them as intuitions (Mantras) which dawned on the minds that were fit to receive them. They are the eternal verities which come in a flash to saints and sages whose minds are refined and purified by strenuous discipline. What prevents the ordinary mind from receiving these timeless truths is the impurity that has accumulated on it from a dateless past. From their manner of operation these impurities are classified as desire (*kāma*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*), arrogance (*mada*) and conceit (*mātsarya*). These are spoken of as the six insidious enemies of man (*ariṣadvarga*). In the last analysis they are the outcome of the feeling of 'I' (*ahaṁkāra*) and 'mine' (*mamakāra*). A mirror on which much dirt has accumulated reflects the objects in front of it only very indistinctly and sometimes in a distorted manner. If it is cleansed, it reflects the objects properly. The same is the case with the mind. Any knowledge, including that of Brahman, has to appear as a state of the mind (*vṛtti*). A mind which is pre-occupied, which is therefore not free to receive new ideas or a mind which is not sufficiently alert, will fail to grasp the truth of even the objects that are external to it and which are consequently open to observation and experiment.

The difficulty is considerably enhanced when the reality that is to be known is inside of us and hence not open to the ordinary scientific methods of study. 'To the man whose mind is subject to the passion of desire and aversion', writes Śri Śankara, 'there cannot arise a knowledge of things as they are even of the external world; and it goes without saying, that if his intellect is overpowered by passion, the knowledge of the internal self can never arise as it is beset with many difficulties.'[13] 'The mind refined by the subjugation of the passions (*śama*) and the body (*dama*) and equipped with the teachings of the scripture and the teacher forms the sense by which the self may be seen.'[14] In another place he writes that 'divine visions relating to the Ātman occur to him who is free from sundry desires and aspires to know Brahman and for this purpose is engaged in the performance of the obligatory works enjoined in Śruti and Smriti'.[15] The Upaniṣad says:

> 'Where Agni from the chips of wood
> Darts forth, where Vāyu too appears,
> Where Soma also flows freely
> There is the Manas developed.'[16]

The idea is that where *dharma* and ritual are practised, there inspiration is born.

Heavenly bodies which are very far away in space can be brought near to our eyes by means of a powerful telescope; things which are exceedingly minute can be magnified with the help of the microscope. These and other mechanical aids will prove useful when we are studying the external world but they will be of no avail when we want to discover the highest spiritual reality. This is not to be found anywhere outside of us, but has to be sought within the depths of the heart;[17] we have to turn our eyes within, practise meditation and get into communion with the Spirit in us. Very few are capable of taking to this line of investigation. Our attention, which has long been accustomed to look outwards, has to be turned inwards. This costs much effort. The process is as difficult as seeking to divert the course of a mighty river in the direction exactly opposite to that in which it has been flowing for a long time. The Upaniṣad therefore characterizes the man who can accomplish this task as a '*dhīra*'.[18]

[13] *Memorial Edition of Sri Sankara's Works*, Vol. XI, p. 228.
[14] *Ibid.*, Vol. XI, p. 37.
[15] *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 40.
[16] *Sveta. Up.*, II. 6.
[17] *Katha Up.*, II. 12.
[18] *Ibid.*, IV. i.

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It follows that we have to cultivate introspection, self-analysis and deep meditation by slow degrees. Only by long discipline in this direction can we hope to raise our moral and spiritual stature. Knowledge relating to the Spirit is essentially a function of our being. Its clearness will be in direct proportion to the intensity of our moral endeavour. By steady and well-directed Tapas, a man is transformed into a seer. The ego-sense will completely disappear from him and his mind will acquire the purity for the dawn of the highest truths. In that state he will feel himself more a passive recipient than an active participant. He will become unselfconscious and will simply listen to the whisper in the inmost depths of his heart. Truths received in this manner are known by the name of Śruti. The sages do not therefore claim to be authors of those discoveries. Their work is merely to record for posterity what the 'still small voice' whispers from within. This is the most rational way of explaining the *apauruṣeyic* character of the Vedas. Since these truths are given to the sages in their moments of exalted imagination, there can be no dross in them, nothing that is purely local, contingent, accidental or adventitious. They will therefore be the eternal verities, true for all times and places. The march of time and the consequent changes in the conditions and modes of our living will not affect them. The progress of scientific knowledge will leave them untouched. They belong to the highest spiritual plane.

What occurs under high inspiration from above is a law unto itself. It comes when it comes and there can be no prognostications or predictions about it. Even para-psychology has not been able to throw light on the conditions under which it will come or the mode and shape which it will assume. It has therefore been the custom to attribute it to the grace of God. There is no theological bias in doing so. The Upaniṣad affirms that the sage is able to perceive the truth owing to his contemplation and the grace of God.[19] Inspiration, according to this statement, is the joint product of man's contemplation and God's revelation. Scientists like Einstein have admitted that they owe their superior intuitions to the grace of God.

The nearest analogue to what we have said above relating to the rise of the timeless truths in the minds of sages is to be found in the sphere of artistic production. It is said of great poets that they were beside themselves when they composed their masterpieces. Sage Vālmīki sat on Kuśa grass and went into deep meditation before he composed the *Srimad Rāmāyaṇa*. Brahmā's visit and His blessing carry a deep inner meaning. It means that on the poet, who had purified himself by Tapas, the grace of God descended in full measure. Since the great Epic was written to dictation as it were from above, it has stood the test of ages and has become popular not only in this vast sub-continent but also in other lands. Brahmā said: 'The story of Rama will remain current in all the worlds as long as the hills and the rivers last'. This has proved literally true.

Milton has said in his prose writings that 'a great work is not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wind or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge and send out His Seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases'.

'. . . . . I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian Mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure
Instruct me, for Thou knowest . . . .
. . . . . what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert External Providence
And justify the ways of God to man.'[20]

[19] *Sveta. Up.*, VI. 21.

[20] *Paradise Lost*, Book I, lines 12 to 26.

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Speaking of some of the best lyrics of Wordsworth and Byron, Matthew Arnold observes that it looks as if Nature took the pen from the hands of these poets and wrote these pieces for them.[21] It can only mean that these poets composed their best pieces in their unself-conscious mood. They had forgotten themselves for the time being.

So far we have given some account of the psychology of intuitions. We have shown that they are not reached by any clear-cut method but by a process of intellectual, moral and spiritual preparation. It is akin to clearing the ground of all weeds and noxious growths before the soil becomes fit for cultivation. The seed however is to be sown from above. The essential condition is the utter passivity of the mind and laying itself open to be impressed by the eternal verities. This presupposes the elimination of one's kinks, prejudices, preoccupations and obsessions. Only one aspiration is permissible and that is the earnest desire to know and realize the highest Truth.

We may now proceed to give some account of the devices adopted by the seers to put their findings across. This task is beset with many difficulties. The truths which have dawned on their minds go beyond speech and mind.[22] 'Not within the range of sight is this form nor by the eye does any one see it. It is realized only when it is reached by the mind, i.e., in the heart which can exercise self-control. They who know this become immortal'.[23] It is transcendent and bears no relation to anything that we know (*asaṁspṛṣṭa*). It is therefore indefinable. 'There is no likeness of Him whose name is great glory.'[24] It rises above all distinctions including that of subject and object and hence it cannot be known in the way in which we usually know the things around us. It is not therefore the known in relation to a knower. 'He who says that he has *known* Brahman really does not know.'[25] It is the prius and presupposition of all proof and consequently incapable of being proved in the ordinary way. The light which illumines all the modes of our minds and all the states of our experience cannot be known by any other light. 'How can we know the ultimate knower?'[26] Exposition in an intelligible manner is therefore a practical impossibility.

The next difficulty consists in trying to bring deeply felt experiences to the lower plane of rational understanding. There is always a difficulty when we attempt to translate the experiences of a higher level into the language current at a lower level. Just as a logical proposition is an inadequate representation of a judgment, even so a judgment is an inadequate representation of an intuition. Thought rises superior to language, and communion, by the same token, rises superior to thought. The identity between the finite self (*jīva*) and the Supreme Being (Brahman) is felt in depths which thought cannot plumb. The difficulty in trying to put this experience across is obvious. To seek to rationalize it would mean doing great violence to it. Syllogistic proof is out of the question as no middle term is available. The Mīmāṁsakas and the Naiyāyikas put forward plausible arguments but they do not realize that the middle term which they employ is not of their coining, not supplied by experience, but by Śruti. Śri Śankara has drawn pointed attention to this fact in the introduction to his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.[27]

Nor is our language adequate for such high experiences. It is pedestrian, having come into being to serve the humdrum business of everyday life. If it is applied beyond its proper sphere it will break down. Similes and other figures of speech provide partial glimpses but, as George Eliot has said, 'Words are but

[21] *Essays on Criticism*: Essay on Wordsworth.
[22] *Taitti. Up.*, II. 9.
[23] *Katha Up.*, VI. 9 and *Mund. Up.*, III. i. 8.
[24] *Svet. Up.*, IV. 19.
[25] *Kena Up.*, II. 3.
[26] *Br. Up.*, II. iv. 14.
[27] *Mem. Edition*, Vol. VIII. p. 5.
आगमेन त्वात्मास्तित्वेऽवगत वेदप्रदर्शित लौकिक लिंगविशेषैः तदनुसारिणो मीमांसकास्तार्किकाश्च अहंप्रत्ययलिंगानि च वैदिकान्येव स्वमतिप्रभवाणीति कल्पयन्तो वदन्ति प्रत्यक्षश्चानुमेयश्चात्मेति ।

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broken light on the depths of the unspoken'. The Upaniṣadic seers are therefore said to have adopted the method of silence to expound the doctrine of Brahman. Śri Śankara quotes from an Upaniṣad which is no longer extant: 'A student by name Baskali requested his teacher, Badhava, to instruct him. The teacher remained silent. The student repeated the request a second and a third time. The teacher observed: "I am teaching you all the time, only you do not understand it. This Brahman is silence".'[28] The same attitude was adopted by Sri Dakshinamurti when he gave instruction to Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra. It is said, that His exposition of the doctrine of Nirguna Brahman by the method of silence dispelled all doubts from the minds of the students.[29]

This method may be all right with regard to very advanced pupils like the mind-born sons of Brahma, but it will not do with others who are *adhikārins* of a lower grade. Some exposition in terms of language has necessarily to be given for their benefit. To make up for the deficiencies of language, the seers frequently resort to parables, parallel cases and similes. It is well known that Śri Ramakrishna used to elucidate many of his spiritual experiences by means of apt parables. In the Upaniṣad the parable of the blind-folded man, left in a lonely place by robbers, finding his way home by seeking the guidance of people at various points, is given to illustrate the ignorant man finding his way to enlightenment with the help of a competent guru.[30] A man becoming oblivious to everything inside or outside of him when he is embraced by his beloved is given as the nearest parallel to the deep communion with the Infinite which the finite self experiences in *samādhi*.[31] Rivers losing themselves in the ocean and honeys collected from different flowers losing their distinctive taste when they are put in the common pool are given as the nearest similes to illustrate the merger of the *jīva* in Brahman.[32] The salt crystal, completely dissolving in water leaving no substance behind, is given to elucidate the notion that consciousness is not an attribute of the Ātman but its very stuff.[33]

Now we come to the methods adopted to give instruction. Gradualness is an accepted educational method. The student has to be led step by step, from what he knows to what he does not know, from what he is familiar with to what is unfamiliar to him. Varuṇa's instruction to Bhṛgu is an excellent instance in point.[34] From the notion that matter is Brahman the student is led on to the notion of 'Bliss is Brahman' through easy stages. From matter to vital force, from vital force to consciousness and from consciousness to self-consciousness and lastly to bliss. The student is asked to dig deeper and still deeper till he lights on the rock-bottom truth. It is like pulling out the inner rind which is deep down in the reeds.[35]

Sage Sanatkumara's instruction to Narada is yet another instance of the same method.[36] Though the latter had mastered all the branches of learning that were extant at the time, he had not attained peace of mind. He had learnt from teachers that only the knowledge of the Ātman will take a man beyond the sphere of sorrow. To receive this instruction, he approached Sanatkumara. The latter characterized all the vast learning that Narada had acquired as mere 'mantra' or name. This characterization created the desire in Narada to know what was superior to 'mantra' or name. That provided the occasion for the sage to start with speech and proceed by stages to the *Bhuman*, which is of the nature of bliss and therefore beyond all sorrow. In-between the two there are twenty intermediate steps. Each succeeding one is superior, from the moral and spiritual standpoint, to what precedes it. Thus

[28] *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 587. उपशान्तोऽयमात्मा ।
[29] गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तुच्छिन्नसंशयाः ।
[30] *Ch. Up.*, VI. xiv. 2.
[31] *Br. Up.*, IV. iii. 21.
[32] *Prasna Up.*, VI. 5, *Mund. Up.*, III. ii. 8, *Ch. Up.*, VI. 9.
[33] *Ch. Up.*, VI. 13 and *Br. Up.*, II. iv. 12.
[34] *Taitti. Up.*, III. 1-6.
[35] *Katha Up.*, VI. 17.
[36] *Ch. Up.*, VII.

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till the end Narada's curiosity is kept on edge. At each stage he feels a strong urge to know what is higher. Broadly speaking we may say that the instruction proceeds from what is exterior to what is interior, from what is gross to what is subtle, from what is caught in the realm of distinctions to what rises above all distinctions.

Another method is to get some one to state a number of inadequate definitions of Brahman, examine them, bring out their deficiencies and thus prepare the way for a fuller and more adequate definition. The final definition comes as the logical culmination of the notions already examined and found wanting. It does not look like one imposed from without and wholly unrelated to all that has gone before. The continuity is kept up in a skilful manner. King Aśvapati's examination of the definition of Ātman Vaiśwānara advanced by the six Brahman pupils who approached him,[37] king Ajātaśatru's analysis of the twenty odd definitions of Brahman mentioned by proud Bālāki[38] and Yājñavalkya's critique of the six notions regarding the Supreme Being that Emperor Janaka had gathered from various scholars[39] are good examples of this method of procedure. The important point to note is that the inadequate definitions are not dismissed outright but given their due place. They are shown to be based on certain attributes of Brahman, which are undoubtedly useful as supports for meditation. They therefore point only to the Brahman with attributes (Saguna Brahman) and not the Brahman without attributes (Nirguna Brahman). Meditation on Saguna Brahman however will gradually prepare the way for the realization of the Nirguna Brahman.[40]

To ascertain the circumstance which is most essential for the occurrence of a phenomenon, analysis and elimination are necessary. If we had full control over the situation we could employ experiment under laboratory conditions, effectively eliminate all the unessential circumstances and demonstrate beyond a shadow of doubt which particular one is causally connected with the phenomenon. Where we do not have full control over the situation we have to wait for favourable conditions to turn up in the course of nature. It is well known that students of Astronomy undertake journeys to distant places to observe the skies under a total eclipse of the sun. Such a method of observation is known as 'Natural Experiment'. The seers of the Upaniṣads fall back on this method to demonstrate their findings. That the Vital Force (*Prāṇa*) is the most essential condition for the sustenance of life is shown in a somewhat picturesque manner in what is known as the *Prāṇasaṁvāda*.[41] The other competing factors such as the eye, ear and so forth are made to leave the body one by one and it is shown that nothing serious happens. But when the *Mukhya Prāṇa* just makes an attempt to quit, everything is thrown into disarray and it becomes quite clear that it is the *sine qua non* of life.

Another important instance of the same method of study is provided by the analysis of the three states to show that it is the light of the Ātman which illumines every experience including the perceptual. Many factors are present when we perceive an object in our waking moments, the light of the sun, the functioning of the sense of sight, the activity of the mind and the self behind them all. When however we pass from the waking state to the state of sleep, the sense of sight does not function and consequently we lose contact with the light of the sun and the objects of the external world. But we perceive objects in dreams. Though there are no chariots, horses or roads in that state,[42] we perceive them all the same. This is due to the activity of the mind.[43] When we pass to the state of dreamless sleep, we have no particular experi-

[37] *Ch. Up.*, V. xi-xviii.
[38] *Br. Up.*, II. i.
[39] *Ibid.*, IV. i.
[40] *Amalananda's Kalpataru* :
वशीकृते मनस्येषां सगुणब्रह्मशीलनात्
तदेवाविर्भवेत् साक्षात् अपेत उपाधि कल्पनम् ।

[41] *Prasna Up.*, II. 1-5 ; *Ch. Up.*, V. 6-12 ; *Br. Up.*, VI. i. 7-13 ; *Kausitaki Up.*, II. 14.
[42] *Br. Up.*, IV. iii. 10.
[43] *Ibid.*

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ences. We have to conclude that even the mind ceases to function here. But though there are no particular experiences in this state, it is not a mere blank. There is an experience of happiness. This becomes clear from the recollection the next morning. An experience presupposes an experient. In the absence of the mind, we have necessarily to suppose that the light of the Self, which is the only residuary circumstance left, must illumine that state. In fact, it is this light which streams out through the mind and the sense organs and illumines the objects that we see even in the waking state. The light of the sun is an adventitious aid. It may go out, but perceptions will still be possible. The Ātman is the only unfailing light.[44]

[44] *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 7.

The final method — if method it can be called — is the mere assertion of a deep heart-felt experience (*anubhava*). This admits of no questioning as it is an authentic and genuine experience. It is self-certifying and stands in no need of external proof. 'The subtle, extensive, ancient way has been realized by me' says the sage.[45] Śri Śankara affirms a similar experience of his in his *Sūtra Bhāṣya*.[46] Such an affirmation gives the quietus to all doubts and objections.[47] Such experiences are open to verification. They are within the reach of all who go through the required discipline.

[45] *Ibid.*, IV. iv. 8.

[46] *Vedanta Sutra*, IV. i. 15.

[47] अनुभवावसानत्वाद्ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य ।

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

SWAMI TATHAGATANANDA

'The ethic of Reverence for Life is the ethic of Love widened into Universality. It is the ethic of Jesus, now recognized as a necessity of thought.' — *Albert Schweitzer*

HUMANITY, oppressed by its so-called teachers and politicians, seems to be a diseased body that is slowly festering to death. The entire atmosphere is saturated with barbaric mirk, ugly vulgarity and inordinate ambition. The human heart seems to be full of selfishness and lust. The world, dazed by its own misfortune, hankers after a clear and decisive lead. The combative instinct of a savage prompts us to think that one man's good can be found in another's evil. The whole of the civilised world, in spite of its splendid achievements, lives under a constant shadow of fear. Humanity has to be rescued from the fatal grip of materialism. The world is sick. 'Bleeding from war wounds,' says Sorokin in his preface to *Re-construction of humanity*, 'and frightened by the atomic frankensteins of destruction, humanity is desperately looking for a way out of the death-trap.' Dr. Schweitzer has shown a path — the path of love based on 'Reverence for Life'.

He was a rare personality born with a divine aroma. He was a symbol of infinite ocean of love and light flowing over the ocean of darkness and death. His philosophy of love was magnificently demonstrated in our world of fanaticism and selfishness. The bombshell of this gentle humanity burst upon the petrified dogmas of the 20th century. He shook the conscience of the thinkers. He was immensely successful in bringing back the best sense of *Shraddha* or Reverence for Life. This personal faith is a central luminous fact around which all the other facts are but tributary satellites in the constellation of a man's character. The world view of 'Reverence for Life' has, therefore, a religious character. The man who avows his belief in it and acts upon this principle shows respectful sympathy with other life.

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Man does not live by bread alone. He requires a personal faith by which he can live a blissful life — not a mere existence of pain-pleasure dimension. Here we are to recognise, perforce, the value of faith in life — the need for something to ground our life upon. Visions of a higher life alone can lend significance to our dwarfed stature. While passing through a stream in a steam-boat amidst the herd of hippopotamuses in Africa in 1915, he suddenly experienced an unpredictable flash of insight. From his own words we get the picture : 'There flashed upon my mind, unforseen and unsought, the phrase "Reverence for Life." The iron door had yielded. Now I had found my way to the idea in which affirmation of the world and ethics were contained side by side'. This was the solemn *mantra* of his life. Life as such was sacred to him. Should we put on the spectacles of the Spirit we could see that wisdom and love are the steel girders, that support the edifice of existence, and that the materials of this world are merely the clouds of vapour escaping from the chimney. This is the truth of life. Thus he had become a gentle herald of mercy.

Dr. Schweitzer as he himself tells us, had always been sensitive to pain and suffering. It had affected him so vigorously that in his boyhood he questioned himself about his right to personal happiness. 'It struck me as incomprehensible that I should be allowed to lead such a happy life, while I saw so many people around me wrestling with care and suffering.' This idea had a strong grip upon his mind and haunted him through all the happy years of studentship and through all his distinguished scholarly and artistic activities. 'Then one brilliant summer morning (in 1896) there came to me as I awoke, the thought that I must not accept this happiness as a matter of course, but must give something in return for it. . . . I settled within myself before I got up, that I would consider myself justified in living till I was thirty for science and art, in order to devote myself from that time forward to the direct service of humanity. Many a time already had I tried to settle what meaning lay hidden for me in the saying of Jesus : "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel shall save it." Now the answer was found. In addition to the outward, I now had inward happiness.'

The outstanding trait of Schweitzer's character is his intrepid manhood. He was highly educated ; but a learned man is not necessarily a thinking man. He had a hatred for the polysyllabic stupidity of the scholar. He felt himself out of step with the world. His momentous decision to serve the down-trodden people of Africa was really astonishing. This urge to dedicate his life at the altar of suffering people led him to undergo immense suffering at the initial stage. He was a triple doctor — in music, theology and philosophy. Now he had to study medicine at the age of 30.

Why did he choose Africa? The entire world of the middle ages — with its sufferings, vices, prejudices and poverty — was imprisoned in that dark continent, waiting for the happy day when some one would come to overthrow the demons who lurked among the shadows of the trees. It was destiny flashing her teeth in a savage laugh of thunder at the huge cosmic fun of justice. To expiate for the sins of the Europeans he went there. He had said that openly and with rare courage. 'We are burdened with a great debt. We are not free to confer or not to confer benefits on these people as we please it. It is our duty. Anything we give them is not benevolence but atonement.' He had to leave his most successful scholarly, artistic, and other creative activities, with their popularity and handsome income. He buried himself for the rest of his life in the equatorial jungle of Africa without 'any sense of tragedy of a ruined life'. His service in the Lamderene Hospital in Congo ushers in a new faith to the tormented humanity. It serves as a consolation in sorrow and sufferings, as a perfect sanctuary in this world of pettiness and selfishness, and as a sequestered bower of beauty amidst the weariness and fever of our day-to-day life. He was neither irritated by the failure nor cowed

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down by frustrations which is the common lot of all social workers. The pressure of work could be imagined from his utterances: 'Heavy is the burden of fatigue and responsibility, which have lain upon me without a break for years. I have not much of my life for myself, not even the hours I should like to devote to my wife and child.'

It was by virtue of his dauntless spirit that he could break through the meanness of the people and direct the current of love and steadfast activities of his fellow brethren not towards the limited sphere of Christianity but towards kindness, compassion and ever widening humanity. This rare humanity is what constitutes the true glory of his life; his stupendous elevation of character dwarfs even the greatness of his work. No doubt his is a work of solitary greatness. But the moral worth of an action cannot be found anywhere else but in a principle of will, without regard to the ends which can be attained by action. It is the quality, not quantity of service that counts. The Truth of unity of existence inspired him to show respect for all life — sentient and insentient. This is the spring board of his altruism. This love we firmly believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of this disordered world. This attitude seems to be foreign to our nature. It is really difficult for us to reach that height of superhuman wisdom.

Secular or social service has its own pitfalls. It contains the seed of destruction. One great reason for its failure is myopic vision. Spiritual outlook is always superior to it in view of its knowledge of unity. A secular outlook in the sense of an anti-spiritual mentality will only help inflate and perpetuate egoism and thereby defeat the secularists' declared ideal. Again, love springs from the sense of unity. Secular idea is bound to be static. The alchemy of love can make it dynamic. 'Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; . . . charity seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; ... beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' — (I Corinthians 13.)

EDUCATION OF WOMEN

G. VENKATESAN

Swamiji's Two Purposes

Swami Vivekananda's own life had had 'two definite personal purposes,' says Sister Nivedita, 'of which one had been the establishment of a home for the Order of Ramakrishna, while the other was the initiation of some endeavour towards the education of women.' The establishment of a well-knit organisation of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission has been the enduring monument of his creative genius. Similarly Swamiji's educational ideas and suggestions provide the key for the emancipation of Indian women. For Swami Vivekananda felt that there is no task more important, more urgent and more worthwhile which could compare in significance and magnitude with that of women's education.

National Ideals of Indian Womanhood

Any scheme of women's education, however scientific and pragmatic it may be or any movement for the uplift of Indian womanhood, however well-intentioned it may be, is bound to fail if it is not built on the bed-rock of the national ideals of womanhood as enshrined in the history, scriptures and literature of ancient India.

As illustrious representatives of eternal cultural ideals many an Indian woman stands out as luminous exemplar of womanhood on our national consciousness. They are the models of outstanding attainments in various fields. In ancient India girls received education on the same footing with that of the boys and the women held a higher place in their hus-

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bands' homes. Rig Veda says that 'though she loved fine dress, it alone could not satisfy her. She was noble, independent-spirited and fearless. She was not only a mother of heroes, but she was also heroic'.

Vispala, the queen of King Khela, for instance, had fought in battle. Indrasena, wife of Mudgala, helped her husband as charioteer in fighting their enemies. Ancient women were not only heroic but equalled in intellectual competence with the mighty minds of those distant days. Among the Rig Vedic seers 26 were women. The rare intellectual attainments and spiritual upliftment of the Buddhist nuns were sufficient to prove that women's education in the Buddhist period was no less advanced.

Our people have been taught, from hoary antiquity, to look upon women as the veritable embodiment of the Eternal Being realized as Mother Divine. It is this idea of sanctity and nobility attached to the person of a woman that has ever since determined our dealings with and attitude towards women. She is the repository of human kindness and in her is manifested divine love in the form of mother's affection and characterized by infinite forbearance and forgiveness. Her patience, her sacrifice, her earnest solicitude for the well-being of the children, are matchless and have no parallel. The chaste, pure and fearless women have their own strength, their own functions and their own place in the scheme of nature and order of society. Through the sublimity of their character, through sacrifice and service, Indian women have ensured their dignified position in society. These national ideals should ever remain green as eternal lights for the guidance of Indian womanhood. '. . . On the sacred soil of India, this land of Sita and Savitri,' declares Swami Vivekananda, 'among women may be found such character, such spirit of service, such affection, compassion, contentment and reverence, as I could not find anywhere in the world. . . . The women of India must grow and develop in the footprints of Sita, and that is the only way.'

THE ONLY WAY

To enable our women to develop in the footprints of Sita, to mould them as the embodiment of feminine virtues and to train them to solve their own problems, education of women must be based on the true national ideals. That ensured, Swami Vivekananda would leave the details to be adjusted according to the exigencies of the times by women concerned. He considered the emancipation and freedom of women as an essential precondition for the early national regeneration. For he was quite definite that unless 'Indian women who are the embodiments of Divine Mother' were recognized as such, India could in no other way achieve her pristine glory. But the Swamiji sternly warns the self-imposing, over-enthusiastic western-oriented supporters of women's freedom thus: 'Who are you to solve women's problems?' he asks. 'Are you the Lord God that you should rule over every widow and every woman? Hands off. They will solve their own problems.'

Swami Vivekananda never attempted at a set scheme of women's education nor did he present a blue print on the emancipation of women. He never assumed the role of a reformer, though at times he threw out a hint or two as to the future development of our women. Though he desisted from pronouncing any dogmatic rigid body of knowledge regarding women, his educational ideas and suggestions, particularly with reference to women, are as relevant today as they were during his time because they deal with the basic issues of women's education. Swamiji was well aware of the grave problems confronting the Indian women, 'but none that are not to be solved by the magic word — education. Educate your women first and leave them to themselves; then they will tell you what reforms are necessary for them. . . . Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way'. Such an education must be evolved carefully without resorting to any feminist revolution, because 'violent attempts at reforms always end by retarding them',

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This is the only way by which wise education could be imparted to our women.

Right Sort of Education

Swami Vivekananda never got tired of pleading for a 'right sort of education' which will turn out ideal women in the world. The edifice of women's education should be raised on the firm foundation of chastity, because it is their heritage and the Hindu women will easily understand what chastity means. Hence Swamiji's strong plea to 'intensify that ideal within them above everything else, so that they may develop a strong character by the force of which, in every stage of their lives, whether married or single, if they prefer to remain so, they will not be in the least afraid even to give up their lives rather than flinch an inch from their chastity. Is it little heroism to be able to sacrifice one's life for the sake of one's ideal, whatever that ideal may be?'

Swami Vivekananda desired Indian women to grow up as ideal matrons of the home in time. For happy homes are the natural nurseries of basic virtues in children. '*Mātṛvam, pitṛvam, āchāryavān*' says the Upaniṣad — education is to be received first from the mother, then from the father and lastly from the teacher. The rudiments of the intellect of the child are developed, basic patterns of its behaviour are formed and its healthy habits are largely fixed in the early years and these initial years are spent chiefly with the mother. The attitude and behaviour of the mother conditions the growth of the child and shapes its senses properly. If she is kind-hearted, noble-minded, well-informed about the home, society and the world around her, properly acquainted with history, literature, religious works, fine arts etc., her children naturally and instinctively imitate her behaviour, learn these habits and acquire her interests. A mother's intellectual attainments, social habits and cultural and moral inclinations, unconsciously but perceptibly become the second nature of her children who live under mother's protection and care. 'The educated, conscientious mother, who lives and works with her children in the home,' concludes the University Education Commission Report, 'is the best teacher in the world of both character and intelligence'. Children who are brought up in such a salutary environment will have a background of information, understanding and culture, which will equip them better to reap the best of the formal school education than otherwise would be possible. It is perhaps with this in mind that Swami Vivekananda asserts that 'the children of such mothers will make further progress in the virtues that distinguish the mothers. It is only in the homes of educated and pious mothers that great men are born'. Since motherhood is the crown of womanhood and the home with the woman as its centre is the bed rock of the social fabric, no education is more meaningful, more valuable and more useful than the education for home-making.

Swami Vivekananda was very clear and definite about the curriculum and the content of women's education. He commends that the essential points in history and the Puranas, religion, arts, science, house-keeping, cooking, sewing, hygiene should be taught to women. Any system of women's education should be based on the right conception of the dignity, position and function of the Indian woman in Indian society. No system of woman's education will succeed unless it has this scientific and rational basis. The education of a future wife and mother is bound to be wider than the education of a boy. A wise system of women's education should, therefore, include all the important cultural subjects that a boy learns at the secondary and college levels. Besides the subjects suggested by Swamiji, the course for women may include household arithmetic, home management in all its aspects, psychology of the child. Japa, worship, prayer and meditation shall form an indispensable part of their teaching.

Ideal characters must always be presented to the view of the girls to imbue them with

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devotion to the lofty principles of selflessness and sacrifice. *Mahabharata, Ramayana* and other historical records stand testimony to the brave deeds and the eternal glory achieved by Indian women. The great Savitri, the ideal wife Sita, the learned Maitreyi and Gargi, the heroines Laxmibai and Ahalyabai, the mother Jijabai, the Holy Mother Sri Saradamani, of the historical times have made their names immortal and left their footprints in the annals of Indian history. Their exemplary characters should be brought home to the minds of the present generation of young women so that they could be inspired to mould their own lives in the light of these noble examples.

Along with other things Swami Vivekananda desired that women should acquire the spirit of valour and heroism. True, modern women need not be trained to play the role of the Queen of Jhansi or Ahalyabai. But they must be healthy and vigorous. Swamiji thought it necessary for them to learn self-defence also.

Well planned physical exercises should be made compulsory to girls. Every girl should spend at least thirty minutes every day in some suitable form of physical exercise and games without resulting in undue fatigue of body and mind. Gymnastic exercises should be prescribed and the sense of rhythm should be developed.

Swamiji was well aware that the more people took to novels and fictions the more will they drift away from the national ideals. So he said that they should be kept away from the girls.

Studying the needs of the age, Swami Vivekananda says, it seems imperative to train some of the women up in the ideals of renunciation, so that they will take up the vow of life-long virginity, fired with the strength of that virtue of chastity which is innate in their life-blood, from hoary antiquity. 'Our motherland requires for her well-being some of her children to become such pure-souled brahmacharinis.' Such noble-minded selfless women are bound to be very few and they should be helped to develop their individuality in the noblest way possible and they must be offered every opportunity of serving the society to the best of their ability. Unmarried women and widows, desiring to lead celibate careers, may organize themselves into a band of dedicated social workers and work on the basis of self-sacrifice in educational and charitable institutions. Swamiji expected that by the personal example of such women and through their endeavours to hold the national ideal before the eyes of the people, a revolution in thoughts and aspirations would take place.

THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION

The present system of education followed by our schools and colleges was mainly developed by a foreign government and as such it could never see the Indian educational problems and needs in their proper perspective. The present system of education is not even psychologically or naturally fitted for an Indian boy; much less is it suited to the needs and requirements of Indian girls. The present system makes both boys and girls unfit to perform successfully their function as citizens of the Indian nation. Any system of education designed for the upliftment of women should be psychologically fitted to the needs and requirements of women. The need for imparting education to woman as woman is all the more greater than previously.

The present system of women's education will continue to suffer unless and until the infinite potentiality that lies dormant in the soul of our sisters and mothers is kindled, awakened and harnessed to the evolution of a richer culture as also to the attainment of the lofty ideal wherein heroism and nobleness, purity and strength, love and piety are blended in beautiful harmony. For the over-all upliftment of Indian women, the root causes of

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their physical decline and appalling ignorance must be removed by a wise system of adult education. The uplift of the women must come first and then only can any real good come for the country, for India. 'If the women are raised,' concludes Swami Vivekananda, 'then their children will by their noble actions glorify the name of the country — then will culture, knowledge, power and devotion awaken in the country.'

THE IMPORT OF MIND IN INDIAN THOUGHT

K. P. S. CHOUDHARY

In Western philosophy and psychology, mind has been primarily used in two senses — empirical and metaphysical. In the empirical sense, mind is conceived as the subject which perceives, remembers, imagines, feels, reasons, wills, etc. and which is functionally related to an individual bodily organism. In the metaphysical sense, it is an entity which manifests itself in consciousness through its diverse functions such as cognitive, affective and conative; and is contrasted with material substance. The mind, indeed, is the central organ which partakes of the nature of the organs of both knowledge (cognition) and action (conation). Without the proper guidance of mind (manas) neither of them can function in relation to their objects. To hear well, to see well, to eat well, to sleep well, in short, in all our acts for a definite planned purpose, mind must be brought into full play.

A question that occurs at the very outset is: 'Who controls the mind and how is mind controlled?' These are really two approaches. 'Who controls the mind' is not exactly the same thing as 'how is mind controlled'. The latter question has been dealt with by the Western as well as the Indian Psychologists. But it is the Indian scholars, the great Indian sages, in particular, who have raised the question 'who controls the mind'. They say that mind or 'buddhi' or both are different from the Ātman or the Self. Mind is sometimes adduced the character of an independent principle in man, and is described variously in the Upaniṣads, as '*yajamāna*' or the patron (*Praśna Up.* IV-4), '*daivaṁ cakṣuḥ*' or the divine eye of the Ātman (*Chā. Up.* VIII. 12. 5), '*anantaṁ*' or infinite (*Bṛhad. Up.* III. 1. 9) and is also said to be 'brahman' or the consciousness of the Vast, for a form of meditation (*Bṛhad. Up.* IV. 1. 6) etc. It is best described as 'the gate-keeper of the realm of Light (*svar*)'.

According to these seers, *Jīva* is the sovereign, the ruling power in the body and all the sense-organs including mind or *manas* or *buddhi* are its adjuncts or agents to carry out the different functions for which each of the sense-organs has been created. But experience goes to show that they do not often obey the *jīvātman*. As the physical sense-organs are not always controlled and well-regulated by the mind, mind is also not always carrying out the behests of its master, the *Jīva*.

The subject we are dealing with requires no serious effort to convince any reasonable person that a life committed to excesses, very soon begins to show signs of deterioration, of damage and decay. The wear and tear is so marked that its repair at times becomes impossible unless and until attended to before it is too late. In the case of a person of controlled mind, however, the objective tendencies are well curbed. The senses are made subservient to the will of their master, the mind.

Now, as we have already explained in a general way, mind when not well-disciplined, is often swayed by other sense-organs. But

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a properly trained mind governs and maintains the balance between so many strong and conflicting tendencies that arise for the gratification of the various senses. Indian philosophers have described mind as '*Ubhayātmaka*'. The *Antaḥkaraṇa,* the internal organ, is the only organ of sense which is viewless and yet without which no other organ is capable of functioning. It is the only organ which is '*Ubhayātmaka*', i.e. capable of functioning in a dual manner. In combination with '*jaḍa-indriyas*' it functions as '*jaḍa*' and with 'Chaitanya' it functions as 'Chaitanya'. This double-edged function of mind lends itself to be interpreted differently. But let it not be ever mistaken for the Ātman. An organ, in the very nature of things, can only be a part of a being and not the being itself. A sword is a weapon in the hands of a soldier, but it is not the soldier. Mind is a weapon indeed — a very powerful weapon but a very dangerous weapon, at the same time, in the service of self. Its effectiveness or utility depends not solely upon its own condition but also upon the capability of the user.

In this view of the matter, we clearly see that mind and Ātman are not the same thing. However, it is a common assumption among the Western thinkers that nothing enters the human mind except through the senses. This assumption, we submit, is not in accordance with what the Indian philosophers have taught. Extra-sensory perception is not a perception through the recognized channel of senses. But let it not be confounded with telepathy or clairvoyance. Experiments in American Universities on a strictly scientific basis, have already yielded valuable results in this direction but what the ancient Indian sages have said is something quite unique.

At this stage it becomes necessary to remember that we are likely to confuse the states of consciousness of the Ātman with the functioning of the human mind. Actually the mind functions in only the first two of the four states of consciousness, which are generally accepted by the Indian sages: viz., the waking, the dreaming, the dreamless and the fourth. Even in the dreamless sleep, which an ordinary person also experiences, the mind ceases to function; there only the consciousness shines. There is also another view which says that there are five states of consciousness. The first three states of consciousness have been declared as having only a relative existence by some of the most eminent philosophers of India like Śankara. And it is too obvious that each of these three states contradicts the other. Therefore, Śankara says that the fourth state, the *turīya* alone can be the real or true state of the Ātman. In this fourth state the ego loses sense of 'I-ness', which experience is not vouchsafed in any of the other three states.

The second school tells us that the experience of loss of 'I-ness' is not the highest attempt or attainment of a yogin. In the fifth state they say that the persevering yogin, from journeying to God journeys in God. In other words, *sādhana* ends and *siddhi* is attained. Or, to put it in another way, the 'I' becomes 'He' and the knowledge of identity between *jivātma* and Paramātma, that was learnt through scriptures, is transmuted into knowledge of identity by realization.

It may be asked how this fifth state is reached? Paradoxical as it may sound, it is a state without any of the commonly known attributes or functions of the mind. In this state, mind, which was so very active, influential and in a pragmatic sense so serviceable in the first two states of consciousness is so suppressed or, to put it in a different way, has by practice and discipline become so placid that the Ātman perceives the Paramātman without the aid of its adjuncts. The beauty of this yoga lies in the realization that the 'Nartakī', 'the nautch-girl' of the Ātman, as Sri Aurobindo calls the mind, can no longer keep the Lord in her clutches. What was 'her' slave at one time is restored to his own position. The Indian philosophers have, therefore, always insisted upon the co-ordination of all the sense-organs amongst themselves as also their subordination to the Ātman.

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With the Ātman thus freed from bondage of sense-objects, the mind, now the beautifully broken horse carries its master, the *jivātmā* to its destined goal which is the '*prāṅgbhūmī*', to quote the words of Patanjali, the plateaux of Ānanda or beatitude and blessedness of the yogins. There, on the summit, when the steed has accomplished its task, it takes leave as it were, of its master, the Ātman, and at his feet lies the knowledge or what the Vedas say 'Ṛtaṁbharā prajñā', the *jñāna* or knowledge of *Ṛtaṁ*, the consciousness of full truth. The realization of this great grand truth establishes the identity which he had so long sought between the *jivātmā* and the Paramātmā. The *sadhana* of the yogin has ended in *siddhi* and the *siddha-yogin* explains in ecstasy of joy '*tat tvam asi*'. The metaphysical distinction or opposition between 'I' and 'You' is gone. And this knowledge by identity is the only fundamental truth, the Vedantic truth, which can be had in no other level of consciousness except the last. His journey to the plateaux marks the fifth and the final state. This is the state in which the whole Truth-Consciousness is perceived when the *dṛṣṭā* (experiencing subject), *dṛśya* (experienced objects), and *darśana* (perception) as well as the *darśayitṛ* (revealer) are absolutely rolled into one. This state, indeed, is a state of utter egolessness, of which another name is Bliss.

Now, it will be seen how different is the approach of the Indian philosophy from that of the Western philosophy. Western philosophers (we include the Western psychologists in them) have, in the first place, drawn no line of distinction between psyche and soul and mind. Secondly, Western psychology deals primarily with the phenomena of the mind from a more or less practical or common sense point of view. Indian seers, on the other hand, hold the view that psychology cannot altogether ignore the mental principle involved in all psychoses or mental processes. 'I', as revealed in consciousness, must be, according to us, at the base of all our operations of the mind.

In his 'New Frontiers of the Mind', Dr. Rhine has gone beyond the recognized channels of knowledge. He says, 'If more were known about the common processes of the mind, such as thinking, willing, feeling, remembering and the like, we might be able more successfully to relate the extra-sensory perceptions process to them'. (p. 191). We have from the start maintained the view that extra-sensory perception is available to man if he trains his mind in the manner our Ṛṣis have indicated. We insist not only on the study of the mechanism of the mind but the conditions and principles of mental life which are based upon the assumption of common mental constitution. There is no escape from the fact that the constitution of mind in different persons is varied and that in employing the method of raising consciousness in individual minds (i.e. in practical application of Yoga) care must be taken to see that the minds so raised are capable of yielding the desired results. This at once raises the question of *sādhana*. A certain or rather a high degree of discipline of body has to be practised before mind can be raised to a high pitch of consciousness. It is the energizing consciousness that makes the mind function from a lower to a higher plane. Each plane of mind represents a layer of consciousness and when the fifth state is reached, mind ceases to go beyond, because of the simple truth that there is nothing beyond where it can go.

Westerners do not admit the validity of any experience other than that of the senses or reason. We do. And we say that extra-sensory perception involves a perception of not only the objects of this world but of the invisible world as well. And herein comes the mystic process of perception which on the hypothesis of western psychology remains unexplained. The Indian thought holds that the *cit*, consciousness, pervades all creation, that all objects are forms and modes of *cit*, both substantially and dynamically. This process of perception is neither magical nor clairvoyant. It is a directed, supervised process, if

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we may say so. When the culmination is reached, liberation has been attained. Thus, it can be seen that we make use of the mind for a definite purpose and we explain, in exploring the faculties of the mind, how mind can be disciplined to subserve the highest purpose of human existence. Western psychologists are yet far away from recognizing the possibility and the potentiality of mind for its supreme spiritual purpose.

We admit that Western thinkers are doing wonders in the physical or material world but in the realm of the spirit they are far behind. They have ignored the fact that man is essentially spirit. And to illustrate the Biblical truth that God is Spirit and that man's highest destiny is to establish his identity with that spirit, i.e. when he can say as Jesus Christ said that 'I and my father are one', he will, sooner or later, have to accept that our concept of mind is all-embracing and that in the final analysis the only way to get the best of both the worlds, objective as well as subjective, is to raise the mind to its supra-conscious level. Science has discovered the physical atom to be a magazine of power. Biology has discovered the wonderful potency and efficiency of the smallest constituents of the glands and of their subtle secretions. Why should mind be denied this potency of perceiving that which is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest, the Ātman?

Mind must be cleansed, purified and trained so that all *saṅkalpas* and *vikalpas* are rested for ever and the seeds of all desires which have their roots in the mind are burnt up by the fire of wisdom. Thus the mind, when it has severed all connections with the other sense-organs, establishes its supremacy over them and at the same time becomes the faithful servant of the Ātman, for which primary use it has been created.

The Aśvamedha-Yajña (horse-sacrifice) described in the Vedas has an allegorical meaning. In the Ṛg-Veda knowledge is represented by the horse. Dadhyāc, a Ṛṣi, gives out the highest knowledge, the *madhuvidyā*, with a horse's head. The Aśvins, the possessors of the horse, are also possessors of the highest knowledge. The Aśva (mind is likened to a horse) is *amedha* (impure or unbroken) in its early stages. As it journeys forth onward and upward it is reaching higher levels of consciousness. The journey, though arduous and hazardous in the beginning, is revealing and rewarding in the end. It represents at any event, a transition from a lower into a higher state. When it has gained the summit, it has ceased to be *amedha*. Aśva and *medha*—*Aśvamedha* becomes a purified, well-trained friend, servant of the Ātman. The 'Aśvamedha-Yajña' (horse-sacrifice) is the sacrifice of the objects of senses. This great sacrifice is indispensable if the great glorious ending in God is the aim and ambition of a *jīvātmā*. Without purity of mind, placidity of mind is unattainable; without placidity of mind, peace of mind cannot be had; and without peace, happiness is a far cry. But when the Yajña is accomplished, the beautiful charger (mind) lies slain. The *jīvātmā* has merged itself in the Paramātmā. The greatest destiny and the greatest good have been achieved. The *jīvātmā* has got all the five *siddhis* (five forms of salvation) that he strived for, viz., Sālokya (residence in the abode of the Lord), Sārṣṭi (enjoyment of Divine powers), Sāmīpya (nearness to God), Sārūpya (similarity of form with the Lord) and Sāyujya (complete identity with the Lord). With the rise of true devotion, desires disappear as a matter of course. The reason for this is that renunciation is the very pith and marrow of devotion. It is wholly exclusive, all-absorbing in character. The mind has taken its master to his own 'Dhāma', the primeval source from where there is no fall for him. The egoistic individuality is lost but eternity has been gained. Human mind, the magazine of all might and magic, has only to be cultivated in the manner our Ṛṣis have taught us and it can still give its wonderful performances even in realms of Light or what the Ṛg-Veda calls 'svar'.

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Mind-culture, as Lord Buddha has said, is the proper yoga of the yogins. When the spirit has got rid of its triple-sheathed-body (*sthūla, sūkṣma* and *kāraṇa*), he reaches the supra-conscious state — the highest state of the mind in which union of the *jīvātmā* with the Paramātmā takes place. A yogin can be said to be in union with God only when he concentrates his mind on his own higher self and is absolutely detached from all the vagrant impulses and piquant passions of the animal-self. When a *sādhaka* attains this union with himself or with God, he is like the motionless flame in a windless place, undisturbed and unruffled by the alluring passions. Being in conscious union with God, he attains the state of *samatva* and perceives himself in all things, and all things in himself; he perceives God in all things and all things in God. As a result of this perception and realization or what William James calls 'Expansion' of mind, he gains holiness of heart, strength of will, vision of unity, perfect balance of mind, unperturbed ideal of equanimity and unalloyed heavenly bliss. And out of the ecstasy and religious intoxication, through plains and plateaux, through fields and meadows, through cities and hamlets, the mind keeps on singing 'I am Brahman' (*ahaṁ brahma asmi*). To this end mind is directed by the Indian philosophers and psychologists.

RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

In *sānanda samādhi*, the perception of the gross form of jar and its subtle form are left out and now pleasure ensues out of the contemplation and concentration on the twenty-four elements (leaving out Puruṣa and God). But because of the presence of the three guṇas, we may argue that pain must also be there if there is an experience of pleasure. Vijñānabhikṣu argues that there is the experience of pleasure only because 'it is to attachment to pleasure alone that the cycle of birth and rebirth and the want of perception of the spirit are due. Therefore, it is pleasure alone that has to be specially perceived and realised in all its phases'.[36]

In *sasmitā samādhi*, the gross form, the subtle form, and pleasure are left out and there is a direct perception of the Self. The consciousness that 'I am different from my body, the gross elements, the subtle elements and the experience of pleasure' is the *sasmitā samādhi*. When perception of the distinction between the Self and not-self occurs, then this *samādhi* is realised.

These four kinds of *samādhi* and the perceptions in them are together called *samāpatti*. The first stage in it is called *prathamakalpika*, the second, *madhubhūmika*; the third, *prajñā-jyotiṣa*; the fourth, *atikrāntabhāvanīya* or *dharmamegha samādhi*.

Vijñānabhikṣu gives a precaution regarding the practice of *saṁprajñāta samādhi* in which we gain concentration by meditating on some object. In order to proceed from the *savitarka* to *sasmitā samādhi*, an aspirant should practise gradually with reference to one and the same object, otherwise, with the change of objects of meditation, calamity of relinquishing the previous practice and the fickleness of mind may ensue. It means that if we have started meditation on a gross object like a jar, then, till *sasmitā samādhi*, we have not to change the object of meditation.

[36] *Yogasarasangraha*, p. 25.

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He is also of the opinion that it is not necessary to revert to the practice of the lower stages of meditation for those people who attain the higher or the highest stage, by the grace of God. In the absence of the grace of God, every aspirant has to pass through all the stages.

Upto this stage, there is only *sabīja samādhi*, because in all the stages there is a relation to the substratum in the form of the object contemplated, and they are productive of tendencies which serve as the seed of future functions of the mind.[37] It can be said to be the state of *jīvanmukti* when a yogin attains to the *sasmitā samādhi*.

The next and the highest stage is *asaṁprajñāta samādhi*, wherein, the inhibition of all the functions of mind has been obtained except the cognition of true knowledge. The past *saṁskāras*, which have started giving fruits only remain, and after sometime, when all their roots are also burnt, it becomes a seedless *samādhi*. Thus the operative *residua* (*prārabdha*) are destroyed only in *asaṁprajñāta samādhi*. There are two kinds of it, viz. *upāyapratyaya* and *bhavapratyaya*. *Upāyapratyaya samādhi* can be achieved in this very life by our own efforts, but it requires the practice of *śraddhā*, *vīrya*, *smṛti*, meditation and *prajñā* (Y.S. I-20). Intense efforts will bring the realization of *nirbīja samādhi* very soon. But, if the means cannot be employed so intensely, then by devotion, grace of God can be achieved which will enable a yogin to attain liberation (Y.S. I-23).

The *bhavapratyaya samādhi* is easy for those who 'by virtue of the ante-natal practices, of the prescribed method, gain discernment and *vairāgya*' and who 'by mere willing attain *samādhi*'.[38] This *samādhi* depends on the acquisitions of the past life which have become operative now. Such persons take their birth at such a time when the fruition (in the form of discernment and dispassion) of the practices of the previous birth starts. Vijñānabhikṣu says, 'In the final stage of *asaṁprajñāta samādhi* all residue (consisting of tendencies and impressions) are completely destroyed; and then, even *prārabdha* (*karmas*) are rendered incapable of producing their results, having become deprived of the help of auxiliaries in the shape of the residual impressions leading upto the experiencing of results (pleasure and pain)'.[39]

SUPERNORMAL POWERS

As a result of *saṁyama* (*dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi* combined are called *saṁyama*), a yogin can attain super-normal powers. The *vibhūtipāda* of the Pātañjala yoga has described a number of such powers. Powers like knowing thoughts of others living at distances, acquiring beauty and strength in the body, knowledge about past life, the time of one's death, etc., can be acquired by a yogin in the course of the different stages of *samādhi*. Birth, medicine, *mantra*, and *tapas* are also the means to attain such powers (Y.S. IV-1). But an aspirant must not be tempted by such powers. If he is tempted, perfect *kaivalya* cannot be attained. *Siddhis* are an obstacle to *kaivalya* (III-37). He is to be firm and should not be allured by the overtures of celestial beings, for fear of falling prey to evil again. The renunciation of *siddhis* will bring the destruction of the seed of evil. If he triumphs over these temptations on the way to *nirbīja samādhi*, he can attain liberation; otherwise, instead of onward march, he will have to suffer birth and rebirth again and again.

ISVARA (PURUSA VISESA) AND PURUSA

Īśvara, according to Patañjali, is a special type of Puruṣa who is untouched by pains, *karmas* and fruition of *karmas* or latent tendencies (Y.S. I. 24). He is by nature omniscient. He is the first teacher and the word expressing Him is *praṇava* or Oṁ. Devotion to Him is included in *kriyāyoga* by Patañjali. Devotion helps us in the realization of con-

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

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centration and in the abstaining of the hindrances arising from *avidyā*, *asmitā*, etc. Vijñānabhikṣu says: 'Devotion to God will bring His grace on account of which in the moments of sluggishness in the employment of means to liberation, *asaṁprajñāta samādhi*, and consequently liberation, may be achieved easily and speedily'.[40] Vyāsa brings out clearly the distinction between Īśvara, the liberated *puruṣa* and the *prakṛti-layas* (whose bodies have resolved into primary matter). Īśvara is never subject to bondage. He has eternal superiority. But those who are in isolation were once in bondage and are in plurality. They have, by efforts, severed their relations with the sources of bondage, viz., *kleśa*, *karma*, *vipāka* and *āśraya*. Īśvara is also distinct from those whose bodies have been resolved but recur when the period of dissolution is over and the world is brought into being anew. 'Īśvara becomes associated with *sattva* only — *śuddha sattva* — for the new creation. He is never stained by *rajas* and *tamas*.'[41]

Distinct from Īśvara there is a plurality of *puruṣas* who are also distinct from one another. They are subject to birth and rebirth. They have to make efforts for liberation, that is, to rise above the limitations of birth and rebirth. Association of *puruṣa*, who is enjoyer, consciousness, witness and inactive, with the evolutes of *prakṛti* (i.e., *mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* and *manas*), puts him in bondage. The question how the pure inactive consciousness comes into contact with *prakṛti* is answered by the statement that *prakṛti* — unconscious and active — is reflected in *puruṣa*, and *puruṣa* because of *avidyā* takes it to be real. *Prakṛti* exists for the enjoyment and liberation of *puruṣa*. 'It is dynamized by the teleological instinct that is wholly intent upon the liberation of *puruṣa*'.[42] When the purpose of liberation is achieved, *prakṛti* ceases to exist for *puruṣa*. If we say that *prakṛti* being unconscious cannot have a desire and therefore, by itself it cannot be active, and then ask: who is responsible for its activity? It is answered that as magnet attracts iron without being active by itself, in the same way, *puruṣa* without being active makes *prakṛti* active. But due to the misunderstanding of *puruṣa* that he is one (with the form of functions — *citta-vṛttis*) with *prakṛti*, he comes into bondage, and thus, becomes subject to birth and rebirth, length of life and pleasure and pain.

Puruṣa by nature is free and liberated, but because of the association with *prakṛti*, due to ignorance, he believes that he is bound and can be liberated. Idea of bondage and liberation is due to ignorance about the real nature of *puruṣa*. It is an illusion. *Puruṣa* is eternal, free and inactive, therefore, suffering, pleasure, pain, volitions, thought etc. do not belong to the true nature of *puruṣa*. It is because of ignorance that we attribute all these psycho-physical functions to *puruṣa*. If this illusion is unveiled and awakening takes place that *puruṣa* is different from *prakṛti* (*vivekakhyāti*), liberation is attained.

Prakṛti is insentient, and therefore, cannot be supposed to have the power of enjoyment. It is meant for the enjoyment of *puruṣa*. *Mahat*, *ahaṁkāra* and *manas*, though, are the most subtle forms of mutations of *prakṛti*, yet, they cannot have the power of enjoyment, they are the means for the enjoyment of the *puruṣa*. The reflection of *puruṣa* in these mutations of *prakṛti* creates a feeling of personality (*asmitā*) and *puruṣa* begins thinking that he is happy or poor or rich. This is ignorance, because *puruṣa* is solitary and without qualities, he does not suffer any change in his eternal nature of consciousness. The attainment of *sasmitā samādhi* will create a discrimination between the true nature of *puruṣa* and the evolutes of *prakṛti* (*vivekakhyāti*) and thus enable *puruṣa* to attain liberation.

Vivekakhyāti has seven stages (Y.S. II. 27). When we have known that what is to be known is *jñeyaśūnyāvasthā*, we have no more dis-

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[41] Brahmalīna munī — *Pātanjala Yoga Darśana*, pp. 133, 137.
[42] Mircea Eliade — *Yoga, Immortality & Freedom*, p. 26.

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satisfaction regarding knowledge. *Heyaśūnyāvasthā* is absence of all pains, because association between the seer and the seen has been overcome. *Prāpyaprāptāvasthā* is the attainment of full knowledge or to become omniscient. *Cikirṣāśūnyāvasthā* is the attainment of the end of all duty through discrimination. *Cittakīkratārthatā* is the freedom of *citta* from pain, when we realize that all difficulties and struggles of the mind have fallen down. *Citta* resolved into its cause (*prakṛti* in equilibrium) is *guṇalīnatā*. When we are established in our self or the *svārūpya* of *puruṣa* has been realized, it will be called Ātmasthiti. If the different steps of yoga leading to *samādhi* are practised, then, we can attain to this stage of *vivekakhyāti*. *Yogavāśiṣṭha* also speaks about seven stages of knowledge, but names them differently, though the explanations are the same as given above. These gradual stages are : *śubhecchā*, *vicāraṇā*, *tanumānuṣā*, *satvāpatti*, *asaṁsakti*, *padārthavāhanī* and *turyagā*. The last stage is the attainment of *kaivalya* or *jīvanmukti*. Past *saṁskāras* are still present and when their roots are all burnt, *videhamukti* is attained. Both Patañjali and the author of *Yogavāśiṣṭhā* hold the same view. These stages show the gradual attainment of the stages of *kaivalya*. In order to gain the last, we have to go through all the stages, but the realization will be attained sooner or later. It all depends on intensity in practice and degree of renunciation by an aspirant. Thus *kaivalya* can be attained by *puruṣa* by means of this discriminating intelligence.

By intense efforts and extreme renunciation, the ineffable height of spiritual perfection may be attained within one life. Lives of great prophets are witnesses to the fact that they experienced as much within one life as ordinary persons would be able to achieve in several lives. It means that the Law of Karma which regulates our lives can be broken by us in one life and we can be free. Yoga does not believe in the control of destiny over man but emphasizes the nature of man to be capable of controlling destiny. Yoga also believes in the continuity of our efforts from one life to another. The *Bhagavadgītā* accepts that a person who fails in yoga is always born in a family which provides necessary requirements for further attempts to make himself perfect (VI. 41).

(To be concluded)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The article 'Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi' by Miss K. P. Sarojini, B.Sc., B.L. (Madras), LL.M. (New York University), Executive Secretary, Marine Law Association of India, Delhi, forms the notes of a lecture given by her at the Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi on the occasion of Holy Mother's Birthday Celebrations in 1964. In a short span the author has brought out some salient points in the Holy Mother's life.

Prof. M. K. Venkatarama Iyer is a retired Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University and has been contributing to the *Vedanta Kesari* for some years now.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer was born in Keysersberg in Upper Alsace (now in France) on January 14, 1875. He started, many years ago, his work of mercy at Lamberene, in the back-woods of Africa. He passed away on September 2, 1965. Swami Tathagatananda of the Ramakrishna Order in his article 'Albert Schweitzer' makes a brief survey of his life and contribution to humanity.

Sri G. Venkatesan is a professor from the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaickenpalayam, Coimbatore.

Prof. K. P. S. Choudhary, M.A., B.L. is Vice-

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Principal and Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology in A. P. S. M. College, Barauni.

'Raja Yoga — Restated' by Prof. Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore is the fifth instalment of the series.

FAILURE OF RAINS AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS

THE extreme paucity of water this year due to insufficient South West Monsoon and delayed North East Monsoon has terribly affected the hydro-electric grids in the Madras State as also the food crops in Madras, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. It has augmented India's difficulties in facing the food problem. India should, at least now, reassess its needs regarding both food and defence, in view of the partisan attitude of some of the Western powers in the recent India-Pakistan armed conflict, as also the strings that may be attached or pressure that may be applied, prior to any food trade agreement with certain other countries.

What we can do at present is conservation of the food grains that we have and make a judicious use of it. As we had said in an earlier issue of the *Vedanta Kesari* a lot of food grains can be saved from being wasted by proper arrangements for storage, transport and distribution. Every effort should be made to see that there is not the least wastage. Stringent measures, to deter laxity on the part of the staff responsible, would help a long way.

It is heartening to note that the Madras Government is trying to help the farmers by rushing pumps to areas where the draught has been acute and where the standing crops need water immediately.

Next, to secure something on a permanent basis, investigations should be made to find out whether, at least some of the water of the rivers that flow into the sea could not be stored and conserved at some other points besides the reservoirs already provided. Thirdly, there must be a co-ordination booth in the Ministry of Irrigation of every State to find out and if feasible to implement the use of river waters of one State, which are in excess of the needs of that State, by the other neighbouring States. If such arrangements are possible they should be forthwith put into execution.

Fourthly, the acquisition of the food grains should be made easy for the Government by voluntary surrender of as much of the crops as can be made without hampering further cultivation and other needs of the farmer.

Lastly, people should also actively co-operate with the Government by trying to live within the rations available, without in any way bypassing the rules and hoarding food grains. In short, if every one sacrifices a little of his personal interest the coming food crisis may be tided over. If India remembers her ideals of renunciation and service and acts up to it, it should not be difficult; in that case we shall be able to meet any situation, whether outside help comes or not. By sacrifice alone can we keep our freedom secure.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

FRAGMENTS OF A FAITH FORGOTTEN: By G. R. S. Mead. Publishers: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. (U.S.A.). Pp. 613. Price: $ 10.00.

This illuminating work treats of the cult of Gnosticism, which had prevailed before and during the first centuries of Christianity, but which had been grossly misinterpreted by the exponents of orthodox Christianity. Few could resuscitate it so ably and so well as the author, who had been catholic enough to admit that the whole history of the churches of Christendom was 'a record of disbelief in the concept of universal religion'. 'There is', he says, 'but one religion for humanity: the many faiths and creeds are all streamlets of this great river'. 'All Hindus are not unintelligent worshippers of idols', and 'the best theology of Christendom has

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its parallel to the best theology and holiest lives among the Brahmans' (p. 11).

Greece, Egypt and Jewry, according to the author, had supplied the power and motive force to the Christian theology. The various schools in each of them have been delineated in a few pages (36 to 95).

The author deals with the earliest sect of the 'Essenes', whose doctrines and ways of living were esoteric but bore remarkable affinity to the discipline of the *Vanaprastha Ashram* (p. 132). They believed in *Karma* and reincarnation (p. 142).

The school of Naasseni (p. 203) believed in rigid asceticism and employed the symbol of a serpent, which the author equates with the Kundalini, the 'Akasa Ganga of the Puranas' (p. 204).

The name 'Docetae' (a sect of Gnosists) (p. 217) the author says, 'is of similar derivation to the Mayavadins of the Hindus'. 'The Primal Being is symbolized as the seed of a fig tree, which is everywhere, smaller than small, yet greater than great, containing in itself infinite potentialities' (p. 218).

According to the author, the Basiledian Gnosis is the same concept as the 'Mula Prakriti of Indian Philosophy' (p. 258).

Valentinus, founder of another sect, laid stress on the yogic discipline of the body (p. 302).

The Gnosis symbolized the ideal universe as the resplendent germ or '*hiranya garbha*' of the Upanishads (p. 320).

The author alludes to the 'Supernal Four' of this school, which reveals itself to mortals in its 'feminine' form to a like concept in India where the God's own form could not be beholden by mortals: the Goddess (Shakti) is His means of communication (p. 363).

The author appropriately enough closes his monumental treatise with the Gayatri (p. 604) and fittingly enough poses this question to all theologians, ancient and modern (p. 606): 'How long must it be before we learn that there are as many ways to worship God, as there are men on earth? Yet each man still declares: My way is best: mine is the only way'!

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

JESUS: By Charles Guignebert. Publishers: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. Pp. 560. Price: $ 10.00.

It is really immaterial — for the worth of the Teachings that go by their name — whether Sri Krishna and Christ actually lived as historical figures and did all that is attributed to them in legends and epics or not. The truth of the teachings stands by itself, verifiable in the consciousness of anyone who takes the trouble to do it. All the same, there are always scholars who are busy erecting theories, contradicting each other in this detail or that. Especially regarding Jesus Christ, the literature is immense, running into thousands of books. Dr Charles Guignebert of the Sorbonne University has undertaken, in this volume, to survey all that has been written on the subject, sift the evidence and present his own conclusions.

The writer is evidently influenced in his approach by the views of Albert Schweitzer. Dr Guignebert has no difficulty in proving that Jesus, the Nazarene of the New Testament is not the Jesus of Nazareth. His conclusions are startling but very plausible, e.g. 'The genuine teaching of Jesus did not survive him'. He observes: 'The Christian religion is not the religion which filled the whole being of Jesus; he neither foresaw nor desired it ... Enthusiasm engendered Christianity, but it was the enthusiasm of the disciples, not that of Jesus'.

A work of conscientious research.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE BIRTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND THE ORIGINS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: By Alfred Firmin Loisy. Pub.: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. Price: $ 10.00.

Alfred Loisy, it will be remembered, was one of those daring spirits who incurred the displeasure of the Roman Catholic Church for the freedom which they claimed to pursue their enquiry into Truth — even the truth of Christian theology. Loisy was opposed to the association of the Church with the State and was instrumental in a large measure for the separation of the Church and Education in France. Like Dr Guignebert, Loisy carried on independent research into all available source-works for fixing upon the origins of the Christian religion and of the New Testament.

The writer has no difficulty in dismissing the conclusions of scholars who hold that Jesus never existed. He maintains, on the other hand, that there was this historical Man of Nazareth. He had in him a divine Presence 'which inevitably led to the development of belief, about him; and the development of Church, sacraments, and other institutional agencies was the inevitable consequence of *that*'. Loisy stresses on this fact of inevitable development following upon the birth of Christ; there was, he points out, no such tradition of faith before him.

The conclusions are worked out with great detail of research and presented without dogmatism.

M. P. PANDIT.

AIR MISCELLANY: Published by the Publication Division, The Government of India, Delhi-6. Pages: 105. Price: Rs. 1.75.

This is an interesting collection of forty talks given on the A.I.R. by competent authorities on various subjects. They have been grouped into nine sections viz: Religion & Philosophy, History & Culture, Science & Technology, Travel & Wild Life, etc., etc.

Sri Diwakar's exposition of the message of the Gita to the Indian Nation in the context of the Chinese posture — to rise to our fullest heights and resist the *adharma*, — is convincing. Venerable Buddharakkita Thera's warning, in the light of the teaching of Buddha, that India has to rely on *its own strength*, especially in the developing situation in the world today, has proved prophetic. Swami Ranganathananda's talk on

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Vivekananda and the circumstances under which his philosophy of *Daridranarayan* took shape is revealing. K. P. S. Menon's narration of the background and the procedure of the interviews conducted for competitive examinations in India and England, and Vijay Merchant's reminiscences of his innings in international cricket as also the advice he received from Patsy Hendren — which he followed — to retire at a stage when people would ask 'why', instead of waiting till they begin to ask 'why not?' etc. provide happy reading.

A varied fare of topics, each delightfully short.

M. P. PANDIT.

RELIGION AND MAN: By H. H. Sri Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar. Pub.: Orient Longmans, Madras. Pages: 40. Price: Rs. 3.00.

The roots of the Hindu Religion, explains Sri Wadiyar, are to be found in the Revealed Hymns of the Veda. The origin of the numerous Gods and Goddesses that adorn the Hindu pantheon is in *Brahman* who is One and yet the Many. The Knowledge and the Practice that leads man to the One is the content of the Sruti.

After giving this general background in the first chapter, the author proceeds in the next to dilate upon certain key-concepts in this living Thought e.g. Mantra, Dhyana, Dharma, Ashrama, Karma etc.

The presentation is lucid and engaging.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE ETERNAL LAW: By R. Krishnaswami Aiyar. Publishers: Ganesh and Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras. Pages: 172. Price: Rs. 4.00.

The author of this popular treatise draws pointed attention to the unique nature of the Religion followed by the Hindus, singular in more ways than one. It has no founder or prophet from whom it derives a name. Its laws of life and spirit are not local but universal. They are, besides, as true today as they were five thousand years ago.

The exposition covers a wide range of topics arising out of the application of the Truth-Laws of this Eternal Religion: psychology, philosophy, spirituality, sociology etc. The writer defends the institutions that have sprung up in the process of the evolution of these Idea-Truths against the inroads of 'Scientific' thought from the West.

M. P. PANDIT.

SANSKRIT

VEDANTA PRAKRIYA PRATYABHIJNA: By Sri Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati. Pp. 672+150. Price: Rs. 16.00. Pub.: Adhyatma Prakasa Karyalaya, Holenarsipur, S.R.

This is an invaluable aid to the *sadhakas* of Advaita Vedanta, and as rightly claimed, opens up for the first time a new line of enquiry and research, about its antiquity. The author is of the opinion that Advaita had existed before Sankara and Gaudapada, although he could not bring himself to believe that there were any dualistic or non-advaitic schools before or during the time of Sankara. In other words, Vedanta up to his time had always been monistic. Vedanta philosophy, according to the author, is systematic inasmuch as it brings everything under one and the same idea, that of Paramartha (p. 39).

Buttressed by copious extracts from Sutra Bhashya, the author points out that the method of negation (*re*: Brahman) is adopted not because of the inability to form a true concept but because 'Brahman is the self luminous light of the witnessing consciousness in us all' (p. 54).

The author resolves the apparent contradiction between a formless Brahman and one with attributes, by pointing out that the attributes or forms are for purposes of meditation; nevertheless it leads ultimately to the aspirant attaining Brahman as his very Self (p. 67).

The author maintains that Sankara's method of Vedanta is a restatement of the theories of Gaudapada, who conceives the Atman as '*ajam, anidram* and *asvapnam*', which is brought home to the aspirants of '*adhyaropa-apavada*' (p. 84). Both, according to the author, had only set out the principles of 'a tradition already well established' (p. 85), and could in no sense be regarded as an 'innovation' (p. 86).

The author has devoted a separate chapter to the so far unknown school of 'Bhartra Prapancha' a contemporary of Sankara, but holding views alien to his (p. 149 to 182).

There is a valuable summation of the characteristics of Pre-Sankara Vedanta, (p. 90 and 91) and the resulting opinion is that the credit of presenting the highly philosophical system of the traditional Vedanta as a theological system with a realistic tinge belongs to Gaudapada and Sankara and Sureswara — the 'three resplendent stars that sparkle unbedimmed in the Vedantic heavens' (p. 92).

There is a very competent account of the succeeding Vedantins to Sankara's Advaita, and an estimate of their respective contributions. The author concludes that we can listen to the teachings of the Upanishads and return to our Brahmic nature, guided by the three illustrious exponents. This present monograph is an invaluable contribution to the Advaitic thought.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

MALAYALAM

SRI SARADA DEVI JEEVITA CHARITRAM: By K. P. Leelamma. Pub.: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur. Pp. 349. Price: Rs. 5.

This book begins with a hymn by Swami Abhedananda to the Holy Mother and an introduction regarding the ideals of Indian womanhood with quotations from Swami Vivekananda, the *Gita*, the *Mahabharata* and other *Puranas*. It has 23 chapters in which the author has taken great pains to collect and portray beautifully all the available material in the life history of Sri Sarada Devi.

It is a complete biography in itself and furnishes us with all the information including seemingly most trivial incidents in the life of the

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Holy Mother. The language is simple but forceful, with an undercurrent of devotion which one can feel while going through the narration.

The book will be of immense help to the Malayalam speaking population who are eager to know the wonderful life of the consort of the divine personality, Sri Ramakrishna, whose name has been penetrating every corner of India, if not of the whole world.

The types used are of a fairly big size and the printing has been neatly done. It has a picture of Sri Sarada Devi at the beginning of the book. The dust-cover is printed with a picture of the Mother's Temple at Jayarambati, the birthplace of the Holy Mother.

The book is a great contribution to the Malayalam religious lore.

MALATI KERALA VARMA.

BOOK RECEIVED

PATH TO BEATIFIC PEACE, Vol. II: Pub.: Rama Sakti Mission, Car Street, Mangalore. Pp. 262. Price: Rs. 3.50.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

REPORT FOR 1964-1965

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal runs an Indoor Hospital and an Outdoor Dispensary. The Indoor Hospital consists of 47 beds. 1,370 cases were admitted during the year out of which 1,227 were discharged cured, 66 were discharged otherwise and 32 remained under treatment. Of the total number, 1,151 were medical and 219 surgical cases.

The Outdoor Dispensary has the following sections: 1. General, 2. Surgical, 3. Dental, 4. Eye and E.N.T. The total number of patients treated during the period in the General Section was 91,218 of which 23,592 were new cases. The Surgical cases treated were 1,449. The number of cases of tooth extractions was 162. The number of patients treated in the Eye and E.N.T. department was 2,016.

5,275 specimens were tested in the Pathological Department.

The Sevashrama has an X-ray plant. 1,432 X-rays were taken during the year.

The Electro-therapy department treated 460 cases.

There is a kitchen garden attached to the Sevashrama, the produce of which largely met the needs of the patients and inmates of the Ashrama. There is also a dairy which partly meets the needs of the Sevashrama.

The Sevashrama has a Library which has 5,283 books including those which are meant for the patients. 38 journals and magazines and 6 newspapers were provided for the reading room of the library.

The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated with special puja and religious discourses.

The management offers their sincere thanks to the donors, subscribers, friends and well-wishers by whose help and co-operation the institution has grown to its present state and appeals for endowments for beds and other needs of the Ashrama.

THE RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, PURI

REPORT FOR 1961-62 TO 1964-65

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Puri has a Library and a Students' Home.

The Library which has completed 40 years of its history has at present nearly 17,795 books in various languages. The library subscribes for 12 dailies, and 41 magazines. In 1964-65 the total number of readers was 39,641 with a daily average of 110; the number of books issued was 7,423.

There is a text book library for the boarders which has 1,065 books. The children's library has 561 books.

The Students' Home maintained 55 students in 1963-64 of whom 27 were from scheduled tribes (Adivasi), 10 Scheduled Caste, 11 other backward classes, and 7 economically backward Caste Hindus. In 1964-65 the number was 56, with 27 Scheduled Tribes, 12 Scheduled Caste, 9 other Backard Classes and 8 economically backward Caste Hindus. The boys were all maintained free.

The birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in a fitting manner.

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The 113th Birthday Tithipuja of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, falls on Tuesday, December 14, 1965.

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

वायुरस्तीति सद्भावः सतो वायौ पृथक्कृते। निस्तत्वरूपता मायास्वभावो व्योमगो ध्वनिः ॥८०॥

Vāyuḥ asti, air exists; *iti*, this (is); *sabdhāvaḥ*, the nature of Reality; *vayau*, in air; *sataḥ*, from Reality; *pṛthakkṛté*, when separated; *nistatvarūpatā*; illusoriness (that is seen is); *māyāsvabhāvaḥ*, the nature of Maya; *dhvaniḥ*, sound (that is in air); *vyomagaḥ*, (is that) of the ether.

80. The word 'is' in the expression 'air is' represents the nature of Reality (Existence). that is in *air*; when, therefore, air is separated from Reality what remains of air is the illusoriness, which is the nature of Māyā. Again, the sound that is perceived in (air) is the nature of *ākāśa*.

NOTE: The following verse is an objection to the above stand taken by the Advaitin.

सतोऽनुवृत्तिः सर्वत्र व्योम्नो नेति पुरेरितम्। व्योमानुवृत्तिरधुना कथं न व्याहतं वचः ॥ ८१ ॥

Sarvatra, in all elements; *sataḥ*, of Reality; *anuvṛttiḥ*, continuity (*asti*, is); *vyomnaḥ*, of *ākāśa*; *neti*, is not; *purā*, previously; *īritaṁ*, was said; *adhunā*, now; *vyomānuvṛtti*, the continuity of *ākāśa*; *vacaḥ*, statement; *kathaṁ*, how; *na vyāhataṁ*, (is) not contradictory.

81. Previously it was said that only Reality has continuity in all elements but not *ākāśa*; now you say that *ākāśa* also has continuity. How does this stand of yours not contradict your previous position?

छिद्रानुवृत्तिर्नेति पूर्वोक्तिरधुना त्वियम्। शब्दानुवृत्तिरेवोक्ता वचसो व्याहतिः कुतः ॥ ८२ ॥

Chidrānuvṛtti, continuity of space; *neti*, is not; *iti*, this way; *pūrvoktiḥ*, previous statement; *adhunā tu*, but now; *iyaṁ*, this; *śabdānuvṛittireva*, the continuity of sound alone; *uktā*, has been told; *vacasaḥ*, (of this) expression; *vyāhatiḥ*, contradiction; *kutaḥ*, where?

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82. In the foregoing what has been denied is the continuity of space. On the other hand what has been pointed out here is the continuity of sound. Where then is the contradiction ? [1]

[1] There is no contradiction, that is the meaning.

ननु सद्वस्तुपार्थक्यादसत्त्वं चेत्तदा कथम्। अव्यक्तमायावैषम्यादमायामयताऽपि नो ॥ ८३ ॥

Nanu, well ; *sadvastu pārthakyāt,* because of *vāyu's* being separate from Brahman ; *asatvaṁ cet,* if it is unreal ; *tadā,* then ; *avyaktamāyāvaiṣamyāt,* being other than like *māyā* (which cannot be grasped by the senses) ; *amāyāmayatā,* otherness than *māyā* ; *kathaṁ,* how ; *na,* (is) not ?

83. Well, if *vāyu* is unreal because of its being separate from Brahman, then being other than like *māyā,*[1] which cannot be grasped by the senses, how can you deny to it otherness than *māyā* ?

[1] *Māyā* is not perceptible to the senses but *vāyu* is, so it is other than *māyā* ; that is the argument of the opponent.

NOTE : This argument is refuted in the next verse.

निस्तत्त्वरूपतैवात्र मायात्वस्य प्रयोजिका । सा शक्तिकार्ययोस्तुल्या व्यक्ताव्यक्तत्वभेदिनोः ॥८४॥

Atra, here ; *māyātvasya,* the *Māyic* ; *nistatvarūpataiva,* illusoriness alone ; *prayojikā* (is the) concern ; *sā,* that ; *vyaktāvyaktatva bhedinoḥ,* between the perceptible and the imperceptible ; *śaktikāryayoḥ,* between *māyā* and its effects ; *tulyā,* common.

84. Here we are concerned with the Māyic illusoriness alone,[1] and this illusoriness is common in the imperceptible *māyā* and the perceptible effects of *māyā.*[2]

[1] And not with the perceptibility or imperceptibility aspect of things.

[2] The perceptible effect of Māyā is the universe, a part of which is air. Hence air cannot be said to be devoid of the Māyic quality — that is the meaning.

NOTE : If it is doubted why there is the difference of perceptibility and imperceptibility, if illusoriness is common to both Maya and its effects, that doubt is being answered next.

सदसत्त्वविवेकस्य प्रस्तुतत्वात्स चिन्त्यताम्। असतोऽवान्तरभेद आस्तां तच्चिन्तयात्र किम् ॥८५॥

Sadasatva vivekasya, the discrimination between reality and unreality ; *prastutatvāt,* being the subject matter of the present discussion ; *saḥ,* that ; *cintyatāṁ,* be pondered over ; *asataḥ,* of unreality (of Maya and its effects) ; *avāntaraḥ,* separate ; *bhedaḥ,* difference ; *āstāṁ,* let be ; *atra,* here ; *taccintya,* discussing about that ; *kiṁ,* what use ?

85. The subject matter of the present discussion being the discrimination between Reality and unreality, let that alone be thought about. What is the use here, in this context, of dealing with difference of quite a separate nature, that exists between *māyā* and its effects ? [1]

[1] It is irrelevent in the context — that is the meaning.

(*Continued on page* 383)
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CONTENTMENT AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

THE first hurdle that man faces in spiritual life is his mind. It is a formidable hurdle but at the same time a very delicate one. It requires careful handling. The nature of the mind is fickle. Even a world-conqueror may be but a slave to his mind. The speed of the mind is said to be the fastest that can be thought of. It moves so fast, now it is here and in a moment it may be thinking of the remotest part of the globe. Again it is like a double-edged sword which cuts both ways. It can kill or save a man, spiritually speaking. So one has to be very dextrous in using it.

Further, it is not possible to measure the fickleness of the mind. If you happen to visit a menagerie you will notice the restlessness that is manifested in the caged beings, — especially the wild animals like bears, tigers and lions — moving round and round their cages. The agitated state of monkeys is proverbial to need repetition. The human mind is more restive and restless than all these. Swami Vivekananda once said that the mind is like a mad monkey, intoxicated with liquor and bitten by a scorpion. The agitation that goes on in such a monkey is inconceivable. Naturally prone to fidgetiness, madness increases its unrest enormously. What then will be its state if it becomes drunk and is bitten by scorpion? Can we have any idea of it? Its unrest cannot even be imagined. We will surely pity such a creature. Yet that is the very nature of an uncultivated, uncultured and uncontrolled mind. It flies from enjoyment to enjoyment. Even in sleep it is pestered with the impressions that it receives in the waking and is forced to project a thousand and one pictures of pleasure. One thing, however, that prevents the mind from perpetual dreaming is its being confronted by the painful side also. That is what breaks the dream and that is, again, what breaks our waking dream also.

The first thing, therefore, that we have to learn is that this fickleness will not do, that discontentment is the mire in which we get stuck up, that ambition is a trait that projects a fast receding goal, an *ignis fatuus*. Maybe ambition is all right for those who immerse themselves in materialism. But it does not bring them happiness. On the contrary it pours into them the poison of disquietude, a hankering that becomes unsatiable. Sri Ramakrishna's advice to a devotee in this connection can be noted with profit. Adhar Chandra Sen when he came to Sri Ramakrishna was holding the post of a deputy magistrate, a post that carried prestige in those days. He became much attached to Sri Ramakrishna and the Master too loved him. Adhar sometimes used to come straight from his office to Dakshineswar, lest he should miss the Master's company if he went home. Even such a devoted man had once asked Sri Ramakrishna to pray to the Divine Mother, that he could get the post of vice-chairman of the Calcutta Municipality. Let us quote here what the Master said about it.

Master (*to Adhar*) : 'Didn't you get the job?'

In order to secure the job, Adhar had interviewed many influential people in Calcutta.

Master (*to 'M' and Niranjan*) : 'Hazra said to me, "Please pray to the Divine Mother for Adhar, that he may secure the job." Adhar made the same request to me. I said to the Mother : "O Mother, Adhar has been visiting You. May he get the job if it pleases You." But at the same time I said to Her, "How small-minded he is! He is praying to You for things like that and not for Knowledge and Devotion."'

(*To Adhar*) : 'Why did you dance attendance on all those small-minded people? You have seen so much; you have heard so much! After reading the entire *Ramayana*, to ask whose wife Sita is!

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'Be satisfied with the job you have. People hanker after a post paying fifty or a hundred rupees, and you are earning three hundred rupees! . . . Serve him whom you are already serving. The mind becomes soiled by serving but one master. And to serve five masters!'

To call out such strong remarks from the Master two things were necessary: the Master's interest in the welfare of the devotee and his urge to point out to one and all the gaping chasm that awaits a spiritual aspirant, if he entertains worldly ambitions. There is no end to man's desire and no satisfying of all of them even if the whole world with all that is in it were his. There is no satisfaction in the enjoyment that comes from wealth and the like. Peace comes from contentment and contentment from being satisfied with whatever one has got.

II

Why do we hear from every spiritual master that we have to give up worldly thoughts if we are earnest in seeking God? Christ said to a rich man, who had asked to be initiated into the life of religion, 'Sell everything you have, give it to the poor and then follow me'. Sri Ramakrishna said 'lust and gold' are the two impediments in the path of a spiritual seeker. The Upaniṣads too are categorical in their declaration, 'Neither by actions, nor by progeny and wealth, but by renunciation alone some attained liberation'.[1] Why is this so? Can there not be a *via media*? Knowing Brahman alone one goes beyond death; there is not any other path[2] declare the Vedas. Because, first of all, the world is such a subject that it engrosses the whole of man's mind once he gets into it. Worldly goods can so tangibly be grasped and palpably felt and perceived that it requires a very keen intellect to see in and through the kaleidescope of this world. That the world, like a kaleidoscope, is but a glass tube with some glass pieces in it, worth nothing, yet lure people of immature minds again and again, is a fact that is discerned by a very few, a microscopic minority.

Secondly, a mind that is given to the world is always restless and an agitated mind is not the proper medium, not the proper ground, for the reflection of God's image. Arjuna, the hero, of many a battle confesses that the mind is, even as air, very difficult to control[3]. It is a common phenomenon, which is within the experience of every one, that the still waters alone, can properly reflect the objects near it, for example, the landscape on its banks. It is only the crystal clear water, which remains undisturbed or which does not rush at great speed, that discovers to us its bed with its myriad-hued stones and the life it holds in its womb. The case of the mind is very much analogous to this. Unless the mind is calm we cannot find out what is there behind it. Unless it is pure the reflection of the Most High is impossible. That is why the Upaniṣads ask us to ward off thoughts other than about God. They affirm that way alone lies the bridge to immortality.[4]

III

The Hindus believe that man comes into this world to reap the fruits of his past actions. They lie in seed form, in the form of propensities or tendencies, in his mind and bide their time and spurt out when conditions become favourable. They are like the germs of diseases that remain dormant until the body in which they abide gets weak; then they attack with full vigour. The remedy, therefore, as in the case of the body, lies in keep-

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[1] न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्व-
मानशुः ।
Kaivalyopanishad, 1.3.

[2] तमेव विदित्वाऽति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था
विद्यतेऽयनाय ।
Svetasvataropanishad, 3.8.

[3] चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥
Bhagavad Gita, VI. 34.

[4] तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथामृत-
स्यैषसेतुः ।
Mundakopanishad, 2.2.5.

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ing the mind strong, that is to say, wary and watchful. Man is naturally upset if he faces a too bitter or elating experience. This perturbation makes him lose his faculty of discrimination and commit some folly, which he may regret afterwards. It is for this reason that poise of the mind has been so much stressed upon in the *Gītā*. 'He who does not get elated, nor hates; neither grieves nor desires, gives up both good and evil, and is full of devotion, he is dear to Me.'[5] 'The serenity of mind, kindliness, silence, self-control and purity of thought — this is said to be mental austerity.'[6]

Austerity or Tapas is a thing which is almost forgotten in the present age. The modern trend is to give free reins to the mind, and senses. People can brook no restraint on their actions, neither have they control over themselves. They are content to be carried away on the tide of their emotions. They never stop to think of the *pros* and *cons* of their actions; selfishness rules supreme. In short, man is becoming more and more extrovert, the very nature which goes to make mind fidgety and restless. In the wake of this restlessness man rushes after more and newer pleasures until at last he runs up a blind alley, but having failed to cultivate the power to withdraw into himself, he, by the very momentum of his propensities, impinges against the wall, as it were. For given to a way of life that he is no more able to sustain, man loses his mental balance, becomes a neurotic. Therefore, to avoid this danger it is good for every one to practise a little introspection, a little withdrawal from the mad world of the senses.

Sri Krishna in the verse quoted above speaks of serenity of the mind. How can the mind be serene when we feed it and fill it every moment of our life with disturbing and distracting material? The way does not lie in pursuing these distractions but avoiding them. The worldly-wise may indict such a person of escapism but if he desires his own good he should not heed such meaningless chatter. Saner advice is to avoid such temptations. Sri Ramakrishna said that the temptations to man are as pickles to a typhoid patient. They should be kept out of sight.

IV

Having found out the nature of the mind, we should try to seek means to counteract its harmful trends. We have known now that there are lust, anger, greed, hatred, jealousy and pride, lurking in us and that these are deadly enemies of man. These are to be overcome, to be vanquished if we want tranquillity of mind, if we desire peace and bliss. How to do it? Patanjali suggests that a wave of opposite nature should be set against each of these whenever any of them tries to raise its head.[7] Jesus, as it were, reflects the very thoughts when he says, 'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.'[8] When a wave of anger rises smother it with the thought of love. When hatred gushes out arouse the virtue of kindness. Do so every time a wrong thought oppresses you. But this is possible if we constantly and assiduously cultivate the virtues such as kindliness, humility, dispassion and the like. A question may crop up here: What is the necessity of cultivating these virtues? Is it not enough if we send a wave of contrary nature when the evil thought arises? It is not so easy as that. Life is a struggle; it is a war between the lower and higher natures in man. The lower nature is always strong. We have heard in the Puranas how the Devas,

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[5] यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न कांक्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ।
Bhagavad Gita, XII. 17.

[6] मनः प्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ।
Ibid., XVII. 16.

[7] वितर्कबाधने प्रतिपक्षभावनम् ।
Yoga Sutras, II. 33.

[8] *St. Mathew*, 5. 43-44.

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were most of the time defeated by the Danavas and God had to come to their rescue every time. This fight goes on within us too. The demons of evil inclinations are always alert to undermine our Godward life. So our weapons are to be trim, ready and formidable to give fight to these foes. The virtues are our weapons here, and, therefore, are required to be practised continuously until they become a part and parcel of our nature. Then alone can we be sure of defeating the wicked inclinations.

Sri Ramakrishna gives us another method to overcome these evil propensities. 'Direct the passions to God. The impulse of *lust* should be turned into the desire to have intercourse with Ātman. Feel *angry* at those who stand in your way to God. Feel *greedy* for Him. If you must have the feeling of *I and mine,* then associate it with God. Say, for instance, "My Rama, my Krishna." If you must have *pride,* then feel like Vibhishana, who said, "I have touched the feet of Rama with my head; I will not bow this head before anyone else."'[9] Such constant remembrance of God changes the whole fabric of that person's mind. The passions then no more trouble him. He becomes contented and tranquil. He becomes dear to the Lord. 'A Yogi who is always contented, whose passions are under control, who is of firm determination, and whose mind and intellect are given unto Me and is devoted to Me, he is dear to Me.'[10] 'He, by whom the world is not troubled and who is not troubled by the world, who is free from elation, anger, fear and anxiety — he is dear to Me.'[11] To be noticed by the Lord and to be loved by Him, the devotee should make his heart pure, devoid of all other attachments. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.' Purity of heart is achieved by excluding all other thoughts and making it one-pointed; then alone contentment comes. And contentment is the precursor of Knowledge, of the descent of God into man's heart.

Here we may be asked: Is God partial then? Why is every one not dear to Him? The *Gītā* has given us the answer. 'The Lord does not accept anyone's demerits or merits; but knowledge (that the Lord is same to all) is covered by ignorance; because of this they get deluded. But those whose ignorance has been destroyed by the knowledge of the Self — their knowledge, like the sun, manifests that highest Being.'[12] So it is not that God is partial but that we do not need Him. Whatever we yearn for that is given to us. If we seek the things of the world we get them but along with them will come the evils of the world too. A popular story that we come across in the Puranas may well illustrate this fact. Once when the gods had lost their everything to the demons and were sorely dejected, Lord Vishnu told them to churn the Milk Ocean to produce nectar, drinking which the mortals would become immortal. A sort of a pact was patched up between the two quarrelling parties, viz., the gods and the demons, for this purpose and making Vasuki, a huge serpent, the rope, Mandara mountain the churning rod, they churned the Milk Ocean. But the first thing to come out was not nectar but a virulent poison, the very breeze of which suffocated and made the lives of the gods and demons alike miserable. The gods then took refuge in Shiva and prayed to him to save them from that torture. The story says that the great God drank the poison and relieved the universe of its misery. Many other things came out of that great effort but nectar was the last to be produced. This story tells us that things coveted here are not unmix-

[9] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* p. 155 (1948).

[10] सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्योमद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ।
Bhagavad Gita, XII. 14.

[11] यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तोयः स च मे प्रियः ।
Ibid., XII. 15.

[12] नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ।
ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ।
Ibid., V. 15 & 16.

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ed with misery. Pleasure and pain go together; one who accepts pleasure must accept pain also; he cannot avoid it. Sri Krishna says in the *Gītā*, 'The happiness, that is derived from the contact of the senses with their objects, which tastes like nectar in the beginning but in effect works like poison is of *rājasic* nature'.[13] On the other hand that happiness which in the beginning savours like poison but in effect works like nectar that is called the *sāttvic* joy and is born out of the tranquillity and purity of the mind.[14] Knowing this we should pray and strive to attain purity of heart.

[13] *Ibid.*, XVIII. 38.
[14] *Ibid.*, XVIII. 37.

V

There is, however, one discontentment, one restlessness which is not harmful for a spiritual aspirant, viz. divine discontent: restlessness to see God, eagerness to feel His presence. This restlessness on the contrary is an antidote to the other. Here there is no straying away from our moorings. It is rather a gathering back into the fold, a going home. But this discontent comes to one in a million, after years of austerity and practice. Ordinary people have to plod on and try to still the lower type of discontent. For the former discontent leads you towards God and the latter entangles you into the world. Remembering this let us exert our bit to free ourselves from this bondage, from this *Samsāra*.

PANCADASI

(*Continued from page* 378)

सद्वस्तु ब्रह्म शिष्टोंशो वायुर्मिथ्या यथा वियत्। वासयित्वा चिरं वायोर्मिथ्यात्वं मरुतं त्यजेत् ॥८६॥

Sadvastu, the reality (in air); *brahma*, (is) Brahman; *śiṣṭoṁśaḥ*, the residual part (in it); *vāyuḥ*, is air; *saḥ* that (air); *yathā*, as in the case of; *viyat*, ether; *mithyā*, illusory; *vāyoḥ*, of air; *mithyātvaṁ*, illusoriness; *ciraṁ*, for a long time; *vāsayitvā*, impressing on the mind; *marutaṁ*, (the idea of reality) of air; *tyajet*, should be given up.

86. The reality in air is Brahman and the residual illusory part in it is air; that air, as in the case of ether, is illusory. One should impress this illusoriness of air on the mind for a long time and give up the idea of reality of air.

चिन्तयेद्वह्निमप्येवं मरुतो न्यूनवर्तिनम्। ब्रह्माण्डावरणेष्वेषा न्यूनाधिकविचारणा ॥ ८७ ॥

Marutaḥ, than air; *nyūnavartinaṁ*, occupying lesser position; *vahnimapi*, fire also; *evaṁ*, in this way; *cintayet*, be thought over; *eśā*, this; *nyūnādhikavicāraṇā*, discussion about differentiation of less and more; *brahmāṇḍāvaraṇeṣu*, in the context of the universe.

87. Let fire also, which occupies lesser space than air, be discriminated in this way. For this differentiation of more and less has to be thought of in the context of creation.

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REBIRTH AND LIBERATION

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

SOMETIME during the evolution of thought at the human level, when consciousness became self-conscious, man asked himself three questions in one form or other: Who am I? Whence have I come? Whither am I going? These remain man's perennial questions.

Hinduism believes in the soul's immortality and its necessary corollary, the doctrine of rebirth. The thoughts of countless Hindus have been strongly influenced by these concepts during the long period of Indian history. The doctrine of rebirth explains to them the present inequality between men and assures them of their ultimate liberation from the pain and suffering of mortal existence. Immortality as explained by the Hindus is not a dogma but a metaphysical truth based upon direct experience.

According to the Vedas, the unchanging Reality behind the changing universe is Brahman or pure Spirit which from the transcendental standpoint is without name or form or any indicating attributes. It is eternal, infinite, non-dual and of the nature of pure Consciousness. It is unknown and unknowable by the finite mind. But from the relative standpoint Hinduism accepts the reality of Personal God who is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe, and our ultimate saviour. One can directly experience Brahman in the depth of one's meditation.

Investigation into the real nature of man revealed to the Hindu thinkers a Reality which is intelligent, supramental, non-dual, birthless, deathless, and directly intuited. It animates the inert body, the sense-organs and the mind. They called it by the name of Ātman or the Self. It is ever-pure, ever-free, and all peace. Though dwelling in the perishable body Ātman is independent of the body. The *Bhagavad Gita* says: 'Only the bodies of which this eternal, imperishable and incomprehensible Self is the indweller, are said to have an end'. 'It is never born, nor does it ever die. It is not slain when the body is slain.' 'Even as a person casts off worn-out clothes and puts on others that are new, so the embodied Self casts off worn-out bodies and enters into others that are new.' The Vedas teach the complete Oneness of Brahman and Ātman, experienced in deep meditation.

From the relative standpoint, however, Hinduism admits the multiplicity of souls, and distinguishes them from Ātman or the Supreme Self. How the Supreme Self appears as the embodied soul cannot be known by our finite mind. This is what Hinduism calls *māyā*, a sort of metaphysical ignorance. On account of *māyā* Ātman identifies itself with the physical body and becomes individualized. But this identification cannot affect the true nature of Ātman. In our common experience we see the mirage which cannot affect the desert. Heaven, hell, birth, death, and rebirth, are associated with the individualized soul. Rebirth according to Hinduism is governed by the law of karma, which is the same as the law of cause and effect. All the experiences of a life-time cannot be explained if we confine our attention to one life alone. What does he know of life, who only one life knows? It is reasonable to admit the existence of a transmigrating soul to substantiate the general belief in moral requital. We are all born with a blueprint of life as it were, mainly prepared by our actions in the previous life. Our present actions and thoughts are determined by the past. They also influence our future. As you sow, so you reap. We are now reaping what we have sown before. This conviction makes a Hindu believe that he is responsible for his present suffering, and gives him the incentive for right conduct to build up a happy future.

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According to the Hindu scriptures, unfulfilled desires are responsible for man's rebirth. These desires are of many kinds. Some are fulfilled in a human body, some in a subhuman body and some in a superhuman body. Thus a soul assumes an animal, a human, or a celestial body as determined by his unfulfilled desires. Through the animal or celestial body the soul reaps the result of past actions. Only a man is capable of developing his spiritual faculties through a human body. Hence the Hindus regard human birth as a unique privilege.

The Vedas speak of different heavens where righteous souls enjoy happiness in different degrees. The highest is called Brahmaloka which is similar to the heaven of dualistic worshippers. There the fortunate souls experience the most intense joy for the longest period of time, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with the Personal God. A person who performs extremely meritorious actions in this life, but does not attain liberation through Self-knowledge, goes to Brahmaloka after death. Life there is often described as immortality. But this immortality is relative. A continued existence in time is quite different from liberation or true immortality.

The sole factor in the attainment of immortality or liberation is desirelessness. After pondering over the happiness a man obtains from the fulfilment of desires through repeated births in different bodies — ranging from that of a blade of grass to the body of a god in the highest heaven — he realizes that he has not attained true immortality. He then gives up all desires and in the twinkling of an eye discovers immortality through the knowledge of the Self. It comes like a flash of lightning. 'When all the desires that dwell in the heart fall away, then the mortal becomes immortal and here attains Brahman.' The Gordian knot of repeated births is cut asunder in one stroke.

Immortality is not the direct *effect* of any spiritual discipline. It is not something acquired. If immortality were the effect and therefore had a beginning, it would then come to an end. 'All creatures are ever free from bondage and free by nature. They are ever illumined and always liberated.' All that a seeker of immortality need do is to rid himself of the veil of ignorance, which produces ego and desire. These are inevitable as long as one is attached to the body and the world. He must isolate himself from the psychophysical complex by the practice of spiritual disciplines. This requires self-effort. Immediately 'the man, who is always free, realizes his freedom'.

Realization of the soul's immortality robs death of its paralyzing fear. The materialist tries to avoid death as long as he can and then he accepts the inevitable end with stoic resignation. If death gives finality to a man's existence, 'there is, then, nothing to be hoped for, nothing to be expected and nothing to be done save to await our turn to mount the scaffold and bid farewell to the colossal blunder, the much-ado-about-nothing world'.

The Vedas exhort man: 'Know that non-dual Ātman alone and give up all other talk'. Self-Knowledge, as formulated in the Upaniṣads, is unique. A seeker of Self-Knowledge approaches an illumined teacher with humility and receives instruction about the true nature of the Self. The student next reflects on the instruction and rids himself of doubt. Finally, he meditates on the Self with undistracted mind. All traces of ignorance are dispelled, the knots of doubt are cut asunder, and knowledge of the identity of Ātman and Brahman becomes revealed. The rediscovery of this identity is the ultimate goal of evolution.

The knower of Self enjoys freedom while living in a physical body. A free soul is like a person who, having been sick, is made whole again, like one who, having been blind, has regained his sight, like one who, having been asleep, has awakened. He has discarded the mask of individuality and discovered his all-pervasiveness as Pure Spirit. Whether absorbed in meditation or conscious of the outer world, his knowledge of the immortal nature of the soul is constant and his bliss steady. Though often he behaves like an ordinary mortal in respect of hunger, thirst, and other demands of the physical body, he is never

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overwhelmed by them. Established in the knowledge of the oneness of existence, he regards pleasure and pain of others as his own pain and pleasure. He cannot injure any creature by thought or word or action and he dedicates himself to the welfare of all. In short, a free soul lives, acts, and dies under the spell of immortality.

The concepts of bondage and liberation apply only to the unillumined. But for the free soul there is neither bondage nor liberation. A free soul, while living in the body, often experiences disease, old age, or decay; he may be a victim of blindness, deafness, or other infirmities; but having realized that these are the characteristics of the body, the mind, and the senses, he regards them as unreal and remains undisturbed. The thought of death does not create any ripple in the mind of the free soul. When the purpose of his embodiment — namely, the attainment of Self-Knowledge — has been fulfilled, what difference does it make whether the body remains or not? After the image is cast the mould loses its value. A free soul may of his own free will continue to live or assume a new body, for the welfare of mankind.

What happens to a knower of the Self after death? Does his soul go anywhere? The unillumined wander to different planes or return to earth to satisfy their unfulfilled desires. 'As to the man . . . . who is without desire, who is freed from desire, whose desire is satisfied, whose only object of desire is the Self — his life breath does not depart. Being Brahman, he is merged in Brahman.' Just as the old skin of a snake, when cast off, lies on an ant-hill, so does the body of the illumined lie after death. His soul emerges bright and radiant. Once his ignorance is destroyed, a free soul merges in Light, Knowledge, Freedom, and Reality, and never again enters into darkness, bondage, ignorance, or illusion. When the butterfly has emerged from the chrysalis, it does not re-enter its cocoon but flits from flower to flower, bathed in the light of the sun. The free soul, absorbed in Brahman, becomes one with Brahman.

Many people in the West are taking an interest in the theory of rebirth, which to most of them is the same as the immortality of the soul. Belief in rebirth may bring comfort to those who are afraid of annihilation after death or of boredom in heaven. To a Hindu, however, the ultimate goal of life is not to be born again and again on earth, or anywhere else, where life is not free from certain limitations. But he regards rebirth as an important corollary of the immortality of the soul. It explains to him the seeming chaos of the moral inequality, injustice, and manifold evil present in the world of human life, and provides a strong motive for self-denial and the striving to rid himself of imperfection.

The immortality of the soul, with its corollary of rebirth, provides the unbiased scientific mind with a good hypothesis — something with which many scientific investigations start. We can test it by acting on it. Then we shall know whether or not it works. It is more reasonable to believe in immortality than to disbelieve in it. It is more probable than improbable. A man can live by it as if it were true. From the doctrine of immortality and reincarnation he is certain to derive courage and inspiration to face the many baffling problems of life as serenely as countless millions of Hindus have done during the past thousands of years.

QUESTION:

Is there any extenuation of Karma through penitence, any forgiveness or mercy in the order that controls destiny?

ANSWER:

There are three kinds of karma. Some action done in our previous birth determines our present life. It produces fruit which is reaped in the present life. According to Hinduism one cannot completely avoid the result of good and evil actions in the form of happiness and suffering. But by cultivating knowledge of God one can rise above such pain and suffering. The second kind of karma or action done in previous lives lies in store

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to produce its effect in a future life — not in the present one. The third kind of action which is being performed by a man in this life produces fruit that will be reaped in a future life. Knowledge of God cancels the last two kinds of karma. Here is an example: A hunter armed with a bow and arrow, goes into the forest. He believes he sees a deer at a distance. He discharges his arrow and fixes the second one on the bow ready for use in case the first arrow fails to kill the deer. Suddenly he sees that the animal he wanted to kill is not a deer but a cow, which is sacred to the Hindus. He regrets his mistake, does not use the second arrow, and being disgusted with his folly, throws away his bow and the arrows in his quiver. But the arrow which has already been discharged cannot be brought back. The karma which a man performs after the attainment of God-consciousness, and also the karma which will produce its effect in a future life are nullified by knowledge of God. But karma done in the previous life and which is operating in a man's present life must produce its fruit. Penitence or forgiveness or mercy can mitigate the intensity of the effect but it cannot altogether cancel it. If a man is to receive a blow from an axe as the result of his past karma, he will at least be pricked by a thorn.

Now about destiny. According to Hinduism, a man's destiny is nothing but the accumulated effect of his past actions. A Hindu does not believe that either God or an inscrutable destiny is responsible for our experiences of the present life. As we sow, so we reap. We are now reaping what we have previously sown. Good produces good; evil, evil. Man is the architect of his so-called fate and also the builder of his future.

Hinduism does not believe that mere penance extenuates karma, unless it is followed by a change of heart. The Hindu conception of sin is different from the Semitic conception. What is called sin by a Christian is termed error by the Hindus. One cannot avoid mistakes, in some form or other, as long as one dwells in a body. One must not dwell too much on so-called sin. That does not help. Mud cannot wash away mud. Say to God once earnestly that you have made a mistake and pray to Him to give you strength so that you may not repeat it. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that if a man has committed most terrible sins, and then cultivates unswerving devotion to God, immediately he becomes virtuous. A devotee of God can never be destroyed. Forgetfulness of God is sin. Knowledge of God destroys all sins as a spark of fire reduces to ashes a pile of wood.

The pure in heart and the poor in spirit, that is to say the humble, always receive God's grace. The prodigal son is always welcome at his father's house. Every sinner has a future, as every saint has a past. If we advance toward God by one step He comes to us by four steps.

These two systems, the purely spiritual and the sensuous, — which last may consist of an immeasurable series of particular lives, — exist in me from the moment when my active reason is developed, and pursue their parallel course. The former alone gives to the latter meaning and purpose and value. I *am* immortal, imperishable, eternal, so soon as I form the resolution to obey the law of reason. After an existence of myriad lives the super-sensuous world cannot be more present than at this moment. Other conditions of my sensuous existence are to come, but these are no more the true life than the present condition is.

Man is not a product of the world of sense; and the end of his existence can never be attained in that world. His destination lies beyond time and space and all that pertains to sense.

— J. G. FICHTE.

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A RHAPSODY ON VIVEKANANDA

[In the March, 1965 issue of the *Vedanta Kesari* appeared *A Rhapsody on Ramakrishna*, all in the words of Romain Rolland. Here below is its parallel or complement, *A Rhapsody on Vivekananda*, also in the words of Romain Rolland. He who is delighted with one side of a brilliant coin is naturally fascinated by the other side, and Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are but the two sides of the same Coin, two wings of the same Edifice, two notes of the same Rhythm, the one the Founder, the other the Prophet, the one the Snowy Glacier, the other the Flowing Stream. That the soul of man transcends barriers of race and language and sects and symbols is nowhere better illustrated than in the masterly portrayal, by the Western Romain Rolland, of the uniqueness and the sublimity of the spirits of the Eastern Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Indeed the entire account, by Romain Rolland, of the Paramahamsa and the Swamiji is an epic poem of rare insight and high understanding, punctuated throughout by phrases that thrill, expressions that illumine, remarks that enlighten, observations that indelibly record themselves on the reader's mind with a fixity that cannot be shaken off. How indeed, one wonders, has it been possible for this savant of the rational and scientific West to get so deeply and so intimately into the mystic being and the spiritual profundity of the Indian Sage and his gifted Messiah? Again the answer is: the oneness of the human soul; a branch of it may shoot up in the West, and another in the East, but at the roots the soul is one. Romain Rolland has become dear to us of India and dear to all outside her who adore her, for his clear exposition and penetrating analysis of two of the most effulgent blossoms of the tree of Indian genius. The task of preparing this garland of tributes to Vivekananda from out of the flowers in Rolland's literary garden has not been easy, for every word in Rolland's biography is so significant, so irreplaceable and irremovable, that the flower-gatherer and garland-weaver has had to harden his heart and stifle his emotion, times without number, in order to be able to reject and keep off words and phrases which would not tamely put up with rejection. This Rhapsody is therefore to be taken by the reader as just a sip of the Honey which lies gathered and stored in the Comb of Rolland's scintillating treatise on Vivekananda.—R. RAMAKRISHNAN.]

THERE was one exceptional disciple whom Ramakrishna treated in an exceptional way. He had chosen him at the very first glance on account of what he was and what he might become — a spiritual leader of humanity. The torrent forming the remarkable destiny of Vivekananda would have been lost in the bowels of the earth, if Ramakrishna's glance had not, as with one blow of an axe, split the rock barring its way, so that through the breach thus made the river of his soul could flow. Vivekananda was projected into the 'century' by the child-birth of Nature herself, for the time of parturition had arrived for that form of spirit. Ramakrishna is also to be commended for seeing at once in this wayward, tormented and storm-tossed adolescent, as Narendra then was, the future leader, exactly the Evangelist he was expecting.

Vivekananda was a member of a great aristocratic Kshatriya family and his whole life showed the stamp of that warrior caste. His childhood and boyhood were those of a young artist Prince of Renaissance. He was gifted with a multiplicity of talents and cultivated them all. He had a leonine beauty and the lithe grace of a fawn. The possessor of physical courage and the build of an athlete, he was a past master in all physical exercises. He could box, swim, row and had a passion for horses. He had a delightful voice. At college he was distinguished for his brilliant intellect. From his childhood up he practised the habit of meditation. He loved philosophic

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discussions. He imposed on himself a rigorous chastity. He was overshadowed by a great destiny and he wished to be worthy of it and to realize it.

The result of such a multiplicity of gifts and contending passions made him live for many years in great turmoil of soul before his personality became fixed. He needed the living revelation, the realization of the Absolute, God made man — some holy Guru who could say to him : "I have seen Him. I have touched Him. I have been He". Such was he at the moment when he went to meet the Master, who was to govern the rest of his life. The falcon's eyes of Ramakrishna pierced to the depths of his unsatisfied soul, and fixed his choice upon it. He treated him in the light of his special knowledge, and Naren had a privileged place among the disciples. He was struck by the incomprehensible power of Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna had a profound respect for Naren's brilliant intellectual sincerity with its tireless quest for the truth ; he regarded it as a manifestation of Shivaic power. Later Naren was to say of Ramakrishna : 'Outwardly he was all Bhakta, but inwardly all Jñānin. I am the exact opposite'.

Ramakrishna said that the young Naren was of the purest gold and that no taint of this world could sully him. He had a passionate affection for Naren. Ramakrishna had no more submissive son than the great Kshatriya who was born to command. So complete did their union become that at times they seemed to be identified with each other. Ramakrishna said, 'Naren is like the great tree trunks, bearing men and beasts upon the bosom of the Ganges'. He marked on the giant's forehead the sign of St. Christopher — the carrier of men. Ramakrishna did not hide the fact that he regarded Naren as his heir. He looked at Naren with ineffable affection. All his powers were transferred to Naren. The Master and the disciple were one.

When Ramakrishna himself was no more, the fellowship of apostles began at once. Vivekananda put himself at their head by common consent. He was the most energetic, the most vital, the most intelligent — and the Master himself had nominated him. He was like a tornado of fire in the midst of these hermits. He besought them to become Christs in their turn, to work for the redemption of the world, to renounce all as Jesus had done and to realize God. Each of Ramakrishna's disciples, unconsciously through the very bent of his nature represented one phase or one aspect of the multiform personality of Ramakrishna. When they were assembled together he was there in his entirety. Their mighty spokesman, Vivekananda, on behalf of them all was to spread throughout the world the word of him, who, he claimed, was the living synthesis of all the spiritual forces of India. At the feet of the simple Ramakrishna, the most intellectual, the most imperious, the most justly proud of all the great religious spirits of modern India humbled himself. He was the St. Paul of this Messiah of Bengal. He founded his Church and his doctrine.

The great disciple whose task it was to take up the spiritual heritage of Ramakrishna and disseminate the grain of his thought throughout the world was both physically and mentally his direct antithesis. He was energy personified and action was his message to men. His athletic form was the opposite of the fragile and tender, yet wiry body of Ramakrishna. His pre-eminent characteristic was kingliness. He was a born king and nobody ever came near him either in India or America without paying homage to his majesty. It was impossible to imagine him in the second place. Wherever he went he was the first. It was as if his chosen God (Shiva) had imprinted His name upon his forehead.

His super-powerful body and too vast brain were the predestined battle-field for all the shocks of his storm-tossed soul. Battle and life for him were synonymous. This warrior and conqueror wanted to have every thing, both God and the world — to dominate everything — to renounce everything. But this very excess of force made it impossible for him to confine his torrential waters within any bed save that of the river of God — and complete self-surrender to the Unity.

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The superiority of his genius and his knowledge gave him a tacit but definite guidance over his companions, although many of them were older than he. The last words of the Master, when he took leave of them, had been to Naren: "Take care of these boys". Naren had no doubt that a mission awaited him; his power, his genius spoke within him. A prodigious force was rising in this young man. It could no longer be contained. Within him there was a Napoleon. Like a diver he plunged into the Ocean of India. But the fires of genius burned in his eyes. He was a prince despite all disguise.

He wandered, free from plan, caste, home, constantly alone with God. He was making himself the Conscience of India. He made it the first duty of religion to care for the poor and to raise them. He dedicated his life to the unhappy masses.

In the first weeks of 1893 he publicly proclaimed his wish to conduct a Mission in the West. This journey to the West was indeed an astonishing adventure. He did not take a single credential with him. He went straight ahead with complete assurance, as if it was enough for him to present himself at the right time — God's time. A Vivekananda never passed anywhere unnoticed, but fascinated even while he was unknown. He was accepted as a delegate to the Parliament of Religions and at the first glance was to impose his sovereign genius. The young man who represented nothing — and everything — the man belonging to no sect, but rather to India as a whole drew the glance of the assembled thousands. His speech was like a tongue of flame. It fired the souls of the listening throng. It was the breath of Ramakrishna breaking down the barriers through the mouth of his great disciple. The effect of the mighty words was immense. Vivekananda's fame at once spread abroad and India as a whole benefited. Vivekananda became the man of the hour. His moral instransigence, his virile idealism, his dauntless loyalty attracted to him from all sides a chosen band of defenders and admirers, a group of whom were to form his first Western disciples and the most active agents in his work for human regeneration. Men and women athirst for his message came flocking to him.

There was nothing great in the new America which he did not handle with respect, which he did not try to understand and to hold up to his compatriots as an example to be admired. He never ceased to beseech, to stimulate, to harry the youth of India. He was never the man to trouble about religious barriers. He never forgot for a single day the primary idea of his mission. No racial pride was allowed to prevent him from stating the social superiority of the West in so many ways, for he wished his people to profit from it. But his pride would accept nothing except on a basis of equal return. In America he undertook a series of apostolic campaigns with the object of spreading the Vedantic seed, and watering it with Ramakrishna's rain of love. Mighty founder of an Order though he was, he remained essentially a Sannyasin to the end, and he wished to give birth to Sannyasins, free men of God. His motto was: tolerance and religious universalism.

Vivekananda had found in America the most delicate sympathy, the most devoted helpers and a virgin soil crying aloud to be sown. But from the moment that he set foot in the Old World he breathed quite a different atmosphere of intellectuality. And England was to give him the most beautiful friendships of his life.

The news of Vivekananda's success at the Parliament of Religions created in India an outburst of joy and national pride. Rajahs, pandits and peoples rejoiced. India celebrated its conquering champion. He was not the man to flee from triumph any more than from battle. He laid public emphasis on the extraordinary character of a national reception to a Sannyasin without worldly goods, without name, without home, who carried nothing with him but God. He made a super-human expenditure of energy. He scattered his seed to the winds in a series of brilliant speeches, the most beautiful and heroic India had ever heard, sending a thrill through her land. For Madras he reserved his greatest efforts

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Madras had been expecting him for weeks in a kind of passionate delirium. She erected for him seventeen triumphal arches, presented him with twenty-four Addresses in various languages of Hindustan and suspended her whole public life at his coming — nine days of roaring fetes. He replied to the frenzied expectancy of the people by his Message to India, a conch sounding the resurrection of the land of Rama, of Shiva, of Krishna. He was a general, explaining his *Plan of Campaign* and calling his people to rise *en masse*.

The Master's rough scourge made India turn for the first time in her sleep, and for the first time the heroic trumpet sounded in the midst of her dream, the Forward March of India conscious of her God. She never forgot it. From that day the awakening of the torpid Colossus began. If India today has definitely taken part in the collective action of organized masses it is due to the initial shock, to the mighty 'Lazarus, come forth!' of the Message from Madras.

It was with difficulty that he raised his Gurubhais to the level of his own thoughts! They loved their great brother, but they hardly recognized him. They could not understand the new ideal of social and national service, which fired him. But Vivekananda claimed to be the true repository of Ramakrishna's most profound thought. He claimed to be the voice of the Paramahamsa, a faithful steward, exactly carrying out his Master's orders. On account of the immense ascendancy of the young conqueror, the superiority of his genius and the prestige of India's acclamation and on account of the love his brethren bore him and that Ramakrishna had shown for him, (he was the Master's anointed) they obeyed the orders of Vivekananda. He came, so he declared, to create a new order of Sannyasins, who would go down into hell, if need be, to save others. The definitely social, humanitarian and pan-human apostolic nature of the Order founded by Vivekananda is obvious. Its real object was the good of the masses. His mission made him forget himself and his desires, his well-being, even his health for the good of others. The generous passion of his pitiful heart mastered his brethren and disciples, and one and all they dedicated themselves to the multiple forms of human service, which he pointed out to them. His brother-monks had some obscure inkling of his identity with Ramakrishna. Premananda said to him once, 'Is there any difference between you and Ramakrishna?'

Vivekananda was a living hymn of work. His words are great music phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of Handel choruses. I cannot touch the sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of books at thirty years' distance, without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock. And what shocks, what transports must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero!

In 1899 Vivekananda set out upon a second journey to the West. Ramakrishna's small but well-chosen band was very active. The work prospered and its ideas spread. But their leader, three parts of him, no longer belonged to this world. The arrow of Vivekananda was finishing its trajectory. The great journey of his life was ended. 'What does it matter?' he said proudly, 'I have done enough for fifteen hundred years!' At the Math he led a country life, a kind of sacred bucolic like a Franciscan monk. He worked in the garden and the stables. Like the ascetics of *Shākuntala* he was surrounded by his favourite animals. He walked about as in an ecstasy, singing in his beautiful, rich, deep voice, or repeating certain words that charmed him, without heeding the passage of time. But he also knew how to be the great abbot guiding the monastery with a firm hand in spite of his sufferings. No negligence escaped the eye of the Master. Round him he maintained an heroic atmosphere, a burning bush of the soul in the midst whereof God was always present. He was always pre-occupied with the regeneration of India.

He looked death in the face unafraid, as it drew near. On the supreme day, Friday, July 4, 1902, he was more vigorous and joyous

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than he had been for years. He rose very early, meditated alone from eight to eleven o'clock in the morning, ate his meal with an appetite in the midst of his disciples, gave the novices a Sanskrit lesson for three hours and was full of life and humour, walked for nearly two miles, had a last affectionate interview with his monks at evening, and as a convent bell sounded for Arati went into his room, desiring that his meditation should be undisturbed; forty-fiive minutes later he lay down and seemed to be meditating, and at the end of an hour — eternal silence fell. It seemed as if he had gone away in a voluntary fit of Kundalini Shakti — in the final great ecstasy, which Ramakrishna had promised him only after his task was completed. Although absolute detachment bathed the heights of Vivekananda's mind, the rest of his body remained immersed in life and action. His whole edifice bears this double impress; the basement is a nursery of apostles of truth and social service who mix in the life of the people and the movement of the times. But the summit is the *Ava Maxima,* the lantern of the dome, the spire of the cathedral, the Ashrama of all Ashramas, the Advaita built on the Himalayas, where the two hemispheres, the West and the East, meet at the confluence of all mankind in absolute unity.

The architect had accomplished his work. Brief though his life, he saw before he died, as he said, his 'machine in strong working order;' he had inserted in the massive block of India 'a lever for the good of humanity which no power can drive back'.

SWAMI SARADANANDA'S LETTER TO SWAMI ABHEDANANDA ABOUT SWAMIJI'S MAHASAMADHI

BELUR MATH, HOWRAH,
7th August, 1902

BROTHER KALI,

Our revered Swamiji gave up the body in Samadhi at 9-10 p.m. on the 4th of last month, July the 4th . . . . .

The passing away of Swamiji was very wonderful. About two months before, he had been to Kashi. From there, he returned much broken in health. He took to Kaviraji (Ayurvedic) treatment. By that, his health improved. As a result of taking the medicine there remained no water in the stomach. The body looked lustrous and there was an excess of strength. He began to go to Calcutta and return. He felt no strain in walking a mile or two. He even went for a week to stay in a house in a village, named Jagule, a little away from Calcutta, being invited by a friend, the owner. He was not inconvenienced on account of it. He supervised everything at the Math. He also taught the boys (inmates of the Math). The spirit of renunciation had become very strong, as of old. At 4 a.m., he used to take all to the Shrine of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and do Japa and Dhyana there. He would constantly say, 'My work is over. Now, you attend to every thing and give me leave'. Sometimes, he said, 'Death is on my head. Much work and play have been done. Let the world take up what I have done. It will take a long time to understand it. Has one to be always engaged in playing? I have finished it'.

On the morning of the 4th of July, he went to the shrine room and meditated there for three hours. A few days previously, he had told Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda), 'This time I have decided to do one of the two things. Either I shall make the body all right by Dhyana and Japa and engage in work or I shall give up this broken body'. On other days, he used to sit with all and do Japa and Dhyana. On that day he sat alone in the bed room of the Master and meditated. Afterwards, he himself dusted the bedding of Sri Ramakrishna and then descended down-

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stairs and ate with all with great relish. After meals, he took rest for an hour. Then he called together all and taught Vyakarana (Grammar) and Yoga, for two hours. He remarked that the interpretation of the line '*Sushumnah Sūryavarchasa*' in the Ṭika is not correct and gave his own interpretation of it. Afterwards, from 4 to 5 p.m., he went on a walk with Baburam for two miles outside the Math. He told him in the course of conversation the history of the evolution of civilization of all the nations of the world.

Then he went to the water-closet. He observed, 'I feel the body to be healthy today. I have not felt like this for many days. I had a good motion also'.

After sunset, he went to his room and sat for Japa with the rosary. He said (to the attendant) 'Until I call you, go to another room and do your Japa and Dhyana'. After one hour, he called and began to meditate lying down on his bed. The attendant *brahmachari* sat near, fanning him. About an hour passed in this way, he lying still with the face up. Then, the right hand shook slightly and a few drops of sweat gathered, on the forehead. After a period of two minutes he exhaled a deep breath through the mouth. Again two minutes passed, he being still, and then he exhaled another deep breath through the mouth. Along with that, the head also moved and the eyes were fixed steadily in the middle of the brows. A rare radiance and smile suffused the face. Seeing this, all in the Math were called. They found the hands and feet cold. There was no pulse. The doctor was fetched. Dr. Mazumdar came and said that Swamiji had given up the body.

Next day, at 4 p.m., the body was consigned to the flames. That wonderful lustre of the face remained till the end and every one was fascinated by it. His body was cremated on the Western side of the Ganges inside the Math compound. Just on the other side, the body of Guru Maharaj had been cremated.

SWAMI PREMANANDA'S LETTER ABOUT SWAMIJI'S MAHASAMADHI TO SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

The holy feet of Sri Gurudeva, our refuge

BELUR MATH
20th August, 1902

BROTHER KALI,

We are almost dead, still living. There are no longer that power, that radiant commands, and that large-hearted, liberal discussion! By Kaviraji treatment, his body had regained health. There was no particular illness. He just willed and gave up the body.

For about two months he was training the boys (inmates of the Math) in meditation and worship by singing hymns, etc., and he also joined with them in these. We marked that the spirit of Vairagya (renunciation) had become very strong in him since sometime. He used to repeat often this sloka 'Why and for what desire should one be attached to the body?' He used to ask 'What are these two songs Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna liked to have towards the end'. Saying this, he would sing the songs beginning with, 'O Charmer of Śiva, you have bewitched the world', and 'When shall I have Samadhi at the feet of Shyama, the Divine Mother?' You know that the spirit of work was nevertheless in him at all times. About a fortnight previously, he sent Brother Tarak (Swami Shivananda) to Kashi to open an Ashrama there. For the last few days, he had a very strong desire to establish a Vedic School at the Math. On the last day also, three letters were written to Poona and Bombay ordering Vedic books. On that day, he talked with me a great deal on the Vedic School. I asked him, 'What will result from the study of the Vedas?'

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'Superstitions will vanish by the study of the Vedas' was his reply.

Sarat and Rakhal (Swamis Saradananda and Brahmananda) had gone to Calcutta for a few days on some work. Of the older generation Gopal Dādā (Swami Advaitananda) and I alone were in the Math that day. He had no disease, do you understand? He rose up early in the morning on that day and talked with me as usual with spirit (vivacity), wit and fun. He took as he used to do warm milk, and fruits and he was very eager to feed me.

After that, he went on a walk and told me in the course of his talk, 'Why do you imitate me? Sri Ramakrishna forbade imitation. Don't be extravagant like me'. He again said much on the Vedic School. Afterwards, he read what the Yoga said about '*Sushumna*' and remarked, 'The Ṭika is not correct in interpreting the passage. Try to get the real meaning from the original text itself'.

About 8-30 a.m. he entered the shrine to meditate. I went to the shrine at about 9-30 a.m. to do Puja. Seeing me he said, 'Arrange my seat in the bed room of the Lord and close all the doors and windows around'.

On other days, I would do the Puja and Swamiji would sit in a corner of the Puja room and meditate. That day he did otherwise. After 11 a.m. he got up from meditation and sang, 'Is my Divine Mother black? She, with unbound hair, illumines the lotus of my heart'. Then he ate with relish. After meals he talked on many things and rested a little.

After 1 p.m. he woke me up and said 'Let us rise; it is not good for a Sannyasi during the day to sleep. I got no sleep. By meditating a little there has been a slight headache. I see that my brain has been weak'. Then he sat in the library room and taught for three hours Panini's grammar. After 4 p.m. he went on a walk for about a mile outside Mr. Leggett's garden. He related how very big gardens were kept clean with the help of machines by a few hands. Returning to the Math after 5-30 p.m. he answered the call of nature. Then he told me in detail about the history of Europe and the history of Colonies.

At sunset I went to the shrine; Swamiji talked for a long time with our Śaśi's (Swami Ramakrishnananda's) father and then went upstairs and again answered the call of nature. Brajendra, a Brahmachari was with him at the time. He said, 'I feel my body to be very light. Today I am all right'.

Returning to his room he asked Brajendra to give him the rosary. He told him to go to another room and said, 'come when I call'. An hour passed, he called him to fan him and massage his feet. He felt a little sleepy when his feet were being massaged. Half an hour went by and then his hand shook for a few seconds. Later he exhaled a deep breath. one or two minutes afterwards he exhaled another deep breath and he was in perfect Samadhi. Brajendra was frightened and called Gopaldādā to see what the matter was. One or two minutes later I went there and seeing him in Samadhi, I called Śaśi's father and we went on uttering the name of Sri Guru Maharaj in Swamiji's ears, so that he might emerge from Samadhi. His face was resplendent. The expanded eyes were filled with divine lustre. The rare splendour was seen in that beautiful body with the loin cloth alone. Next day also many forgot their sorrows by seeing that glorious face. It was as if God Shiva was lying. There was no change in any part of the body. It would seem that he willed to give up the body. Dr. Mazumdar was fetched that night itself. Sharat, Rakhal and Candan (Vaikuntha Nath Sanyal) came in the night. The doctor could not say definitely by what disease this happened.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say 'When you know your true nature you will give up the body'. That was very fine.

There is a desire to erect a Shiva Temple on the spot where the body was cremated. efforts are being made in that direction.

— BABU RAM.

(*Translated by* P. SESHADRI)

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SPINOZA*

G. N. MATHRANI

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Life of Spinoza

Baruch or Benedictus de Spinoza was born at Amsterdam (Holland) on 24th November 1632. During the period of his education, he studied literature and theology. Later on, when he mentally matured, he gave himself up entirely to the study of philosophy. In the study of philosophy, he was not satisfied with what he learnt from authors and teachers. Consequently he determined to discover the truth by his own creative efforts, and in this he received inspiration from the writings of Descartes (Spinoza was 18 years old when Descartes died).

This dissatisfaction with the traditional knowledge gradually estranged him from the Jewish Synagogue, for which he was ex-communicated and solemnly cursed in the name of God and His holy Angels. This event took place in 1656 when he was of 24 years' age. Thereafter he left Amsterdam and spent the remainder of his short life in various quiet places, for the most part in the country side. Ex-communication was not the end of the persecution suffered by him. Attempts were also made to assassinate him, which he fortunately escaped.

He lived a quiet, austere, frugal, lone and profoundly thoughtful life. He believed in earning his livelihood by work; at the same time, he felt that one should earn his livelihood to fulfil the basic needs of life. He earned his livelihood by grinding and polishing optical lenses. At one time he was offered a professorship at a German University, which he did not accept.

During the last part of his life, Spinoza had many friends and admirers at home, and many correspondents and visitors from abroad. The famous German philosopher, Leibnitz, was one of the foreign visitors. With the visitors he was very persuasive and gentle in his arguments.

He died of consumption in 1677, at the age of forty-four. Spinoza's story has passed into a legend. In the estimation of some, he was a saint and a God-intoxicated man.

Philosophy of Spinoza

(A) *Spinoza's approach to Philosophy* : In two respects Spinoza's approach to philosophy was essentially Indian. (i) Spinoza's interest in philosophy was inspired by extra-intellectual, ethical and spiritual motives. The ancient Indian philosophers sought philosophical knowledge to attain Mukti or Freedom from sorrow and suffering; similarly Spinoza sought philosophy to attain a *true good*, the acquisition of which would give him unending happiness. In his small book *The Improvement of the Understanding* Spinoza writes: 'After experience had taught me that all things which are ordinarily encountered in common life are vain and futile . . . I at length determined to inquire if there was anything which was a true good . . .; whether, indeed anything existed by the discovery and acquisition of which I might be put in possession of a joy continuous and supreme to all eternity'. Such thoughts led him to devote himself to philosophy. (ii) Spinoza, like the ancient Indian philosophers, was serious and earnest about his philosophy, in the sense that he tried to mould his life according to his philosophical convictions, whereas a philosopher like David Hume would set his philosophy aside when he stepped out of his library into the world.

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(B) *Spinoza's Method of Presentation* : His most important work is *The Ethics* in which he expounds his complete system of Thought. His other works, besides *The Ethics*, are *The Principles of Descartes' Philosophy, The Fragment on the Improvement of the Understanding, The Short Treatise, The Theological-Political Treatise* and *The Political Treatise.*

The Ethics is his life's work in a very real sense, as its composition and revision extended over full 15 years of his short life of 44 years. It consists of five parts (1) On God, (2) On the Nature and Origin of Mind, (3) On the Origin and Nature of Emotions, (4) On the Human Bondage, and (5) On the Power of the Intellect or Human Freedom.

The method of presentation in the Ethics is strictly geometrical. Each book is prefaced by a number of definitions, axioms and postulates and the argument is presented in the form of a chain of propositions, each complete with its own demonstration.

The use of the geometrical method for a non-geometrical subject matter was not a new and original idea of Spinoza. Descartes and even the earlier philosophers had thought of it, but Spinoza was the one who carried it out. His main purpose in using the geometrical method for writing philosophy was twofold : (i) to be dispassionate in writing, that is, to be free from prejudice, passion, bias or wishful thinking. Prof. Leon Roth points out that Spinoza was capable and yet afraid of fluid prose composition. He was afraid because he felt that in fluid prose composition the writer could not be dispassionate ; (ii) to arrive at absolutely indubitable and certain conclusions. In other words *Spinoza used geometrical method in order to make philosophy impersonal in expression and absolute in truth value.*

Philosophical Doctrines of Spinoza

(i) *Spinoza's Antagonism to Popular Religion* : In general it may be stated that Spinoza vehemently attacks the traditional Semitic view which postulates the extra-cosmic character of God and the purposive character of the Universe. According to the Semitic view God is thought to be external to the Universe and creator of the Universe ; and through His creation God is thought to be seeking the realisation of a purpose.

According to Spinoza, 'God is not a cause outside of things, which passes over into things and works upon them from without. He is immanent, dwelling within, working from within, penetrating and impregnating all things.' In the first part of *The Ethics* he categorically says, 'Everything which exists exists in God and without God nothing could either exist or be conceived.' It should also be noted that Spinoza's concept of God is not that of an all pervasive and omnipresent Spirit.

About creation he goes to the extent of saying that, in the absolute sense 'It cannot really be said to have taken place'. Professor Leon Roth clarifies the Spinozistic standpoint about this matter in the following words : 'In any case even if we accept the idea of creation, we must remember that God not only brought the world into existence, he keeps it in existence as well. He is thus the conserving or sustaining power of the world. God as the sustaining power of the world is not separate from the world so sustained'. (Descartes also considers God to be the power, who both created and conserves the world every moment. Yet he thinks Him to be outside the world.)

Belief in the externality of God, from Spinoza's standpoint, contradicts the all-inclusive character of God and also it involves anthropomorphic thinking. The category of the causation of human activity is used for seeking the causal explanation of the Universe. Human products like watches, motor cars and all other things produced by human beings are, in a sense, outside of the human beings who produce them. This narrow experience of causation tends to make us think that there must be an external cause of the Universe also and we call it God. This is definitely anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphic thinking consists in interpreting everything in the light of our limited human experience. Spinoza condemns anthropomorphism in thinking as a primitive and an infantile trait.

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The traditional religious view also implies that the Universe is an expression of God's purpose. This idea is clearly brought out in the *Doctrine of the final causes*. Human beings always act out of some purpose and therefore they think that God also in creating the Universe must have had some purpose. *Spinoza denies the purposive character of the Universe.* According to him this belief also (i.e. believing in the purposive character of the Universe) is based on anthropomorphism. According to Spinoza man is a part of the Universe and as such characteristics of a part cannot be held to be true of the Whole. This is his reason for not attaching any logical value to anthropomorphic thinking.

Spinoza's denial of the purposive character of the Universe does not imply that he subscribes to the view that the Universe is a chance phenomenon. Spinoza seems to be a sort of a determinist and as such he believes in the law of necessity. According to him whatever exists, exists out of necessity and whatever happens, happens out of necessity. 'But the truth is that Nature set no end before itself and that all final causes are nothing but human fictions. . . . All things are begotten by a certain eternal necessity of Nature and in absolute perfection.' (Spinoza)

(ii) *Spinoza's Metaphysical Monism* : This is also known as Spinoza's doctrine of Substance. Descartes postulates Mind and Matter as two independent Substances and God as their ultimate creator and constant preserver. For seeing in the World the manifestation of two independent Substances his philosophy is said to be a Dualism and for postulating a creator of the Universe he is considered to be a Theist.

Spinoza postulates only one Substance, that is God ; Mind and Matter according to him are its attributes. He calls them Thought and Extension. The innumerable individual minds and particular physical objects are, according to Spinoza, Modes of the two Attributes respectively, each of which constitutes the Essence of the one indivisible Substance.

He defines Substance as that which exists by itself and is conceived through itself. From this definition he derives as necessary implications various other characteristics of Substance : (i) that Substance is self-caused (because it exists by itself and does not derive its existence from anything other than itself), (ii) that Substance is all-inclusive (if it was not all-inclusive, it would not be conceived through itself), (iii) for the same reason Substance is said to be unlimited, infinite and one.

Proof of Substance : Spinoza proves the existence of Substance by identifying it with the totality of existence, which he calls Nature. That the totality of existence or all that exists, exists is a truism. Thus the very emptiness, the indeterminateness of Substance becomes the proof of its existence. Reality of a specific description requires to be proved, but Reality as such requires no proof. Thus, for Spinoza, God, Substance and Nature are synonyms.

By identifying God with Nature he suggests that the distinction between Nature as creation and God as its creator is not significant. He also implies that if God and Nature are identical, there cannot be any opposition between them. Consequently there cannot be such things as miracles in the sense of some things happening contrary to Nature, because the divine and natural forces are one and the laws of Nature are the laws of God. *God is Nature and therefore a prayer to God as an appeal against Nature has no meaning.*

The Concept of Nature : When he identifies Substance or God with Nature by 'Nature' he does not mean 'the concrete composite whole or the sum total of the infinite number of the finite particulars'. By 'Nature' or 'the totality of existence' he means 'the totality which is imperfectly present in every finite particular, of which each finite particular is an imperfect and determinate modification'. 'Individual things express in a given determinate manner the power of God.' Thus by 'Nature' he means 'the totality in the Universe and not the totality of the Universe'.

Estimate of Spinoza's Proof of Substance : Spinoza's proof would be conclusive if by 'Substance' he were to mean 'the sum total

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of all the particular existents, whatever be their specific character'. But that would not prove his metaphysical monism, as the sum total of all the particular existents obviously would be a composite whole, a whole composed of parts, and not an indivisible whole. Spinoza therefore conceives Substance as more than the sum total of all that exists; he conceives Substance as the totality that is present or immanent in all that exists, of which each particular existent is an imperfect manifestation.

In Spinoza's philosophy, Substance as the immanent presence in all things is a metaphysical presupposition. But logically this concept is not perfectly significant and meaningful. To think of the one indivisible substance as being the immanent ground and the indwelling essence of the many, logically implies a sort of divisibility of it. Logically what is in essence indivisible cannot be in any sense present in many. The presence of One in Many may be accepted as a possible mystical experience (which perhaps Spinoza had); but it is difficult to accept it as a logically significant concept.

Moreover Substance, as conceived by Spinoza, is either temporal in character or it is timeless. If it is timeless, it cannot be immanent in the temporal world. If it is temporal it would be divisible by Nature and therefore its simultaneous presence in All would be a divided presence; and that would be in contradiction to Spinoza's concept of Substance.

However his stress on the hidden unity of the Universe, defined in terms of the cosmic immanence of the one indivisible Substance, makes him a monist; and by identifying God and Substance with Nature he becomes a pantheist. Thus Spinoza's general philosophical standpoint is that of pantheistic monism which though clearly stated is not adequately supported by logical reasoning.

(iii) *Spinoza's Ethical Views*: His concepts of ethical determinism, human bondage and human freedom are characteristically Spinozistic views. He is a rigid determinist and regards freedom, in the sense of indeterminism, as meaningless nonsense. But his notion of determinism is peculiar. According to him, all our actions are determined by our impulses, including the so-called voluntary actions. The only difference, between the voluntary or deliberate and the impulsive actions, which he admits is that in the voluntary actions we are aware of our impulses while in the so-called blind and impulsive actions we are not aware of the presence and operation of the impulses.

Bondage and Freedom: According to Spinoza the predominance of what he calls 'Passive emotions' constitute bondage and the predominance of what he calls 'Active emotions' constitute freedom. By 'Passive emotions' he means externally caused blind emotions, i.e. emotions whose cause is outside of us and which we do not understand. By 'Active emotions' he means internally caused enlightened emotions, i.e. emotions whose cause is within us and which we clearly understand; in other words, intellectual emotions. Intellectual love of God is, according to him, the highest of the Active emotions.

Intellectual love of God is the emotion born of the concrete appreciation of the unity of the Universe. According to Spinoza, when the abstract intellectual belief about hidden unity of the Universe grows to be a living thought, a strange emotion fills the mind and that is the intellectual love of God. That state of mind is, according to him, the state of blessedness.

As a living thought, the unity and wholeness of the Universe becomes an inner experience in which the oneness of the World is understood and felt in and from one's own being; whereas in the mere intellectual belief the thought of the unity is suggested to the mind from outside by the rational understanding of the external Universe.

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CALL TO THE YOUTH

BR. SUDHANGSHU

MANY of us are prone to believe that religion and youth are quite incompatible, an antithesis. For, religion is faith, youth is unbelief. Religion seems to be all prejudice, narrow and superstitious ; whereas youth thinks itself progressive, liberal and rational. The 'faith' of the religion is 'doubt' of the youth. It appears that religion is the exit of life, and youth just an entry into it. Thus the pairs of opposites go on expanding the already existing gap between 'here' and 'hereafter'— life and religion, clouding the real issue of continuity and transformation of one and the same life from birth to death and so on.

No doubt the time-honoured censer of religion holding the exhausting taper of life has got very little meaning for the youth. Perhaps like old age pension they pity religion and it is quite likely that in the chalice of their youth they consign to oblivion the impermanence of life and remain deeply engrossed in it.

But the Rishis of yore had outlived all these so-called glamour of youth, wealth and power and had attained that supreme end of life, where there is no death, decay or aging, but complete joy. They realized in their own life that it is the soul that sustains an ever blissful state. The charm of bodily youth fades away sometime or other but the soul perpetuates youth — revivifies it. It is this outlook of an ever youthful immortal life that led Nachiketa to offer himself unto death. The episode says, Nachiketa in his budding youth was offered fair damsels, money, power, territory, long life, entertainments such as music and dance by the god of Death to make him swerve from the path of truth. But nothing could allure him, for he knew that they wear out the vigour of all senses. And the whole span of life is but short. 'So keep thy horses, dance and song for thyself. Man never gets satisfied with wealth. Tell me, O Death, about the supreme life after death regarding which they have doubt. Nachiketa does not choose any boon other than that about the incomprehensible One,' says the boy. This was the tradition of India.

To spread this ancient message of an all-conquering deathless eternal life, the compassionate seers called out : 'May the religious students come unto me, may they come from different parts unto me. May they be well disciplined, may they be tranquil. . . . . As waters flow downwards, as the months flow into the year, so may religious students come to me.' Thus came many Saumyas and Mahabahus and they lived the life according to the tradition.

But for some reason or other this tradition of search after immortal life was to a great extent lost in India — till its revival in the recent renaissance period. The central figure of this great Hindu renaissance movement was Sri Ramakrishna.

The compassionate Saint of Dakshineswar had a vision from the Mother and he was eagerly waiting for the youths to come and join him in his divine mission. He could not control himself, as he described later : 'My ardent desire knew no bounds. That very day, I had to realize it. I no longer listened to what was said around me . . . They filled my mind. I could see them. I decided in advance what I should say to this one and that one . . . By the end of the day the thought of them weighed upon me . . . Another day had gone and still they have not come ! The clock struck, the conches sounded. I went up to the roof in the fading light and with bleeding heart cried aloud, "Come, my children ! Where are you ? I cannot live without you". . . . I loved them more than mother, friend or lover ; I desired them, I was dying in their absence'.

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History repeated itself. The Upaniṣadic tradition was revived. 'The mighty cry of the soul,' as it has been called, was responded to by a few pure souls of the 'young Bengal' group; — who were already out there, seeking life and truth.

Amongst this batch that was attracted towards Sri Ramakrishna, the most prominent was Naren, later Swami Vivekananda. But, this time the repetition of history was with a slight difference. Young Naren was the prototype of Nachiketa. He did not, like Nachiketa offer himself unto God at first. Nachiketa, it seems asked his father filled with all humility and *śraddhā*, 'Father to whom wilt thou give me!' On the contrary, Naren as a young man of the modern world who had studied logic, science, Mill, Spencer, challenged the Saint of Dakshineswar with great vigour, characteristic of his age. Of course the challenge was met properly and the intellectualism of youth collapsed.

Subsequent events show how Naren progressively became possessed with the spirit of Nachiketa of yore: knocking at the door of death, conquering immortality, seeking salvation and service of mankind at large. As a young Vedantin he stood as a conduit or link between the past and the present of India, handing over to us the forgotten heritage of spiritual life and its age-old tradition. His youthful life imparted to it a fresh flow of life, a new lease altogether.

In his call to the youth of the country, he said '"It is the young, the strong and healthy, of sharp intellect, that will reach the Lord," say the Vedas. This is the time to decide your future — while you possess the energy of youth, not when worn out and jaded, but in the freshness and vigour of youth. Work; this is the time; for the freshest, the untouched and unsmelled flowers alone are to be laid at the feet of the Lord, and such He receives. Rouse yourselves, therefore, for life is short. There are greater works to be done than aspiring to become lawyers and picking quarrels and such things. A far greater work is this sacrifice of yourselves for the benefit of your race, for the welfare of humanity. What is in this life?' (*The Future of India*).

Being himself a youngman of stainless purity (whom Sri Ramakrishna called — 'Nitya-śuddha') he expected the same from other young men too, as he expressed himself in one of his inspiring letters (dated 26th June, 1894): 'May even the dust of the world never touch you, for after all, the poets say, it is only a piece of carrion covered over with garland. Touch it not — if you can. Come up young ones of the birds of paradise, before your feet touch the cesspool of corruption, this world, and fly upwards . . . . . Let the world love its many . . . . .'

Further, infusing energy and courage into the young men he wrote in another place, 'We want some fiery young men — do you see? — intellectual and brave, who dare to go to the jaws of death and are ready to swim the ocean across'. He vividly brought to them the picture of India's glory and said 'Millions of your ancestors are watching, as it were, every action of yours, so be alert — Arise, awake, for your country needs this tremendous sacrifice. It is the young men that will do it.'

For him religion was a valiant struggle against life and the world, and naturally he did not like the weak vacillating type of young men to join him in his expedition against poverty, disease, and death, in his heroic adventure for immortality. That was the reason that he bluntly refused a young man in Paris who wanted to join him without knowing that it would require a preparation of fearless love of death and not its awe.

A 'full blooded masculine personality' as he was, he wrote: 'I want iron-will and heart that do not know how to quake' . . . . 'What India wants is a new electric fire to stir up a fresh vigour in the national veins, staunch and sincere to the very back bone and everything will be all right' . . . . 'What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and

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meeting death face to face.' Who can fulfil this want other than the young brave lads of the country ?

Not only strength, purity and character but he wanted young men to have culture and education as well. One day he told one gentleman, 'Chandibabu, you are in contact with many boys — can you give me some fine boys ?' Chandibabu did not understand the word 'fine'. So Swamiji clarified, 'No. I am not telling good looking boys. I want a few healthy, active, honest boys. I want to train them so that they can prepare themselves for their individual salvation and as well serve the good cause of the world'.

Again, Swamiji wrote to Swami Ramakrishnanandaji (Sashi Maharaj), his brother disciple in the year 1895, emphasizing the educational aspect of those who would be the instruments in the propagation of his message, 'Sashi, do not gather good many fools and idiots. Try to collect some manly youthful personalities'.

Swamiji's message to the youth can be divided into three sections : (1) Spiritual and Cultural, (2) Humanistic, and (3) Patriotic.

Accentuating the life of renunciation he wrote in 1894 : 'We want a thousand Sannyasins nay ten or even twenty thousand men and women, both. What are our matrons doing ? We want converts at any risk. Go and tell them ; try yourselves heart and soul. Not house-holder disciples, mind you, we want Sannyasins. Let each one of you have hundred heads tonsured — young educated men, not fools ?'

In his address in 'My Plan of Campaign', he expounded : 'Therefore, my friends, my plan is to start institutions in India, to train our youngmen as preachers of the truths of scriptures, in India and outside India. Men, men, these are wanted, everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing youngmen sincere to the backbone are wanted. A hundred such and the world is revolutionized . . . . . .' To another disciple he adjured 'Preach, preach, unto the world the great truths of your religion, the world waits for them. For centuries people have taught theories of degradation. They have been told all over the world that they are not human beings. They have been so frightened for centuries till they have nearly become animals. Never were they allowed to hear of the Ātman. Let them hear about the Ātman'. This is indeed a great pioneering work for the youngmen to be pursued ceaselessly.

About humanistic work, he said : 'Appreciation or no appreciation, I am born to organize these young men, nay hundred more in every city are ready to join me and I want to send them rolling like the irresistible waves over India, to bring comfort, morality, education and religion, to the doors of the meanest and the most downtrodden. And this I will do or die'. This feeling for the suffering humanity many times overwhelmed him and on one such occasion he declared : 'I am a *tyāgi*, I only want one thing. I do not believe in a religion or God which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth'. To him religion and the art of life was not contradictory and so he wanted to preach both — supplementing one by the other taking a comprehensive view of life — based on collective growth.

Besides these, there are innumerable addresses and letters of Swami Vivekananda with a patriotic message to the young men of the country. During the days of India's struggle for independence most of these were quoted by the freedom fighters. His sayings aroused in them a great sense of responsibility towards, and love for their motherland.

As a prophet of Universal Religion Swami Vivekananda asked the youth of the country to preach the (1) gospel of salvation, (2) the gospel of Ātman, (3) the gospel of social elevation, and (4) the gospel of equality. But he understood the difficulty of organizing them. He said, 'Three men cannot act in concert together in India for five minutes. Each one struggles for power and in the long run the whole organization comes to grief. Lord ! Lord ! When will we learn not to be jealous ? In such a nation . . . . . to create a band of

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men who tried and bound themselves together with a most undying love, inspite of difference, is it not wonderful?'

In another place he thundered: 'There is too much talk, talk, talk! We are great, we are great! Nonsense. We are imbeciles; that is what we are. This hankering after name and fame and all other humbugs — what are they to me? What do I care about them! I should like to see hundreds coming to the Lord! Where are they? I want them, I want to see them. You must seek them out'.

Seeing a few young men jump in to the breach, sacrifice themselves, he hoped for more, and from these low rumblings, he anticipated the coming of a great tidal wave. It is still to be fulfilled. And the undying voice of Swami Vivekananda still reverberates, calling forth the youth of all countries.

Thus the historic tradition of India is repeating again this time, inviting one and all, to come and join in this march of humanity towards amity, happiness and peace; towards an eternal victory over time and death — 'Come my children! Where are you?' Surely the response to this call, familiar to the world down the ages will gradually but duly gain momentum before the world is much older. He had full hopes in the youth as is seen in his following utterance. 'My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. I have formulated the idea and have given my life to it . . . . .'

SUBHEKSANAH—THE ONE OF AUSPICIOUS GLANCE

T. R. RAJAGOPALA AIYAR

SHOULD man strive to attain and perceive God or should God perceive His creature first? Wherein lies the difference? — many a jesting Pilate may ask; but in days when religious belief was not a matter of indifference, this has raised acute controversies, and affected the lives and fortunes of men profoundly. Naturally, stress is laid by the extremists entirely either on the efforts of the creature towards his creator, 'The yearning of the worm for the star' or the overflow of the Supreme Being towards His dependant. Notable and exquisite flowers of thought and feelings have sprung up on the latter category: the doctrine of grace and redemption in the Roman Catholic Church, and all the Vaishnavite cults in India with their stress on Śaraṇāgati or surrender, and the Śakti Nipātam or outburst of the grace of Lord Śiva, among the Śaivites. Everything on earth by an orgy of excess tends to run riot into caricature: the doctrine of Pre-destination of the Calvinists, which drove poor Cowper out of his wits is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the doctrine. Browning has in his inimitable manner dramatised the soliloquy of one of such Calvinists who believes that he was pre-destined to Heaven from the first, in the poet's 'Johannes Agricola in Meditation':

'Ere suns and moons could wax and wane,
Ere stars were thundergirt or piled
The Heavens, God thought on me His child;

Ordained a life for me, arrayed
Its circumstances, everyone
To the minutest; aye God said
This head, this hand should rest upon
Thus, ere he fashioned star or sun.'

While Johannes Agricola looks with exultation on his own immutable glory, he gazes with placid complacency on the wretches foredoomed to eternal punishment.

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'For as I lie, smiled on, full-fed
By unexhausted power to bless,
I gaze below on hell's fierce bed,
And those its waves of flames oppress,
Swarming in ghastly wretchedness;
Whose life on earth aspired to be
One altar-smoke so pure! — to win
If not love like God's love to me,
At least to keep His anger in;
And all their striving turned to sin.
Priest, doctor, hermit, monk, grown white
With prayer, the broken-hearted nun,
The martyr, the wan acolyte,
The incense-swinging child, — undone
Before God fashioned star or sun!'

Any healthy religious community would have laughed away in ridicule this disgusting doctrine, but when it is remembered that an apprehension that he was not destined for salvation but for punishment drove the poet Cowper mad, one cannot be sure about the strange tricks religious fancy will play on man.

Let me now quote in full a sonnet of Leigh Hunt's which all of us knew in our days but is not likely to be so widely known now.

Abou Ben Adhem

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said
"What writest thou?" — the vision rais'd its head.
And with a look made of all sweet accord, answer'd,
"The names of those who love the Lord".
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so",
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee, then
Write me as one who love his fellow men".
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names of whom love of God had bless'd,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Parallel ideas find an echo in all literatures. Let me now revert to the word 'Śubhekṣaṇaḥ', the 393rd word in the Vishnu Sahasranama according to one of its commentators, Śankara, and the 395th according to another commentator, Parāśara. The word means literally — 'the one of auspicious glance'. Śankara expands the idea thus: 'That God whose glance, or beholding whom, is Śubham, or highly auspicious, which confers salvation unto those who seek salvation; pleasures and enjoyment to those who seek for such; removes all doubts and solves all the problems and questionings of men; purifies the sinners; cuts the knots which bind men and make them lead a miserable mortal existence; releases them from all Kārmic toil and drudgery; removes the veil of ignorance which hides truth from the eyes of men; such a Being is the one of auspicious glance.' The Mundaka Śruti (2. 2. 8) declares 'The knots besetting the heart get loosened; all the doubts of man are removed; all work cease for him when He who is higher than the highest gods is seen.'

Parāśara Bhatta's meaning is this: 'He whose cool, broad, generous lotus eyes manifest, as indicated in His thousand names the extent of His untold might and glory and great qualities is Śubhekṣaṇaḥ.' For a verse describes Rama as 'having lovely brows, long rosy eyes, like another veritable Vishnu'; or the word denotes that beholding Him and

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being beheld by Him are auspicious'. And Parāśara goes on to quote the following verses from the Ayodhyākāṇḍa of Valmiki *Ramayana*. In the Ayodhyakāṇḍa, Canto 17, Rama is proposed to be crowned heir-apparent, and he is sent for early in the morning by his father Daśaratha from the palace of his step-mother Kaikeyi, who had extorted a promise from her husband for Rama's banishment. The capital city is one vast concourse of people who have gathered to see Rama crowned. Everywhere men talk about him, his qualities, and his doings. 'Hearing these, and similar praises of himself, by men well disposed towards him, but indifferent to his own self-praise, Rama passed along the broad highway. And once having beheld him, the chief among men, none could withdraw their gaze or their minds, even after he had passed beyond their ken. For verily, *he who beholdeth not Rama, or who is not seen by Rama, liveth condemned by men; why, his own self reproaches him!*' After reading this classical passage from the *Ramayana*, one cannot miss the note of deeper significance and agree with the traditional interpretation which holds that the Rama 'of the auspicious glance', was not the mere 'Nara', the mortal, but the 'Narottama', as Valmiki styles him, the divine Avatar of the Lord. The Sahasranama commentary does not take the word Rama to be a proper name entirely; it also equates him with God — He who taketh delight in men or He who delighted men.

Abou Ben Adhem whole-heartedly desired and believed that he was a Bhakta, a great lover of God, and fit to be entered in the shining book of the Recording Angel; but alas! the angel denied it. In deep humility Abou Ben Adhem accepted the verdict and desired to be entered lower as a lover of his fellow men, and thus unsuspectingly qualified himself to be entered in that other page of 'those whom love of God had blessed and lo! his name led all the rest'. The point is, that one's name must find a place in the book of Life of Chitragupta, the recording angel, under one or other of these two categories. And so long as man either sees God or is seen by Him, the 'Śubhekṣaṇaḥ', there is no question of first or last or mutual exclusion, and no chance of being erased from the book of life. And this is what Leigh Hunt has so penetratingly stated in his sonnet 'Abou Ben Adhem', and what the word 'Śubhekṣaṇaḥ' profoundly signifies.

A LOVING TRIBUTE TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

DR. JOHN C. WYMAN

(Reproduced from the *Brahmavādin* of February, 1903)

A pure, grand soul hath left us journeying here
While he, a victor crowned, hath sped to heav'nlier sphere:
We mourn our loss, and sadly gaze, with grief untold,
Along that shining way on which his spirit bold.
Yet calm and wise, hath gone. Alas, no more
Shall we his gentle presence know. *This* we deplore!
"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die,"
A poet sang. *So lives he* in our hearts for aye.
The magic spell of his surpassing eloquence
Oft filled our souls with longings deep, intense
And prayerful, as the splendour of his thought,
All glowing with a light from heaven caught,
Moved us to wonder, rapture, smiles and tears, —
Sweet memories to linger through th'eternal years!
Farewell, Dear Brother! Thou wert one of "God's own kin," —
Thy home of *peace* and *rest* thou now hast entered in!

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

In Balarambabu's house as also in Varanasi Lātu Maharaj incessantly preached the glories of the Master, but never for a moment did he show any sign of bigotry. He held very liberal views about all faiths and religions. He paid great respect even for the rituals of all faiths. We have seen him offering bread and meat to Jesus Christ on Christmas Day and garland on the Good Friday; on the Id and Mohurram days he used to send offerings to the *durgas* of some Pirs. On the birthday of the Prophet he paid his special reverence to him. We have also seen him sending offerings to the temples of the depressed classes on the occasions of their special ceremonies, and sharing the *prasada* brought from those places with the devotees, with great joy. That he himself worshipped Śiva has been mentioned. On the occasion of the Diwali we have seen him making arrangements through a priest, for the worship of Mother Lakshmi in the image. To whatever temple he went he invariably offered some money. Although so liberal he held his life wholly dedicated to the Master and his chosen deity (who to him, were one).

Once some one complained to Lātu Maharaj about some communal incidents that took place at Gaya and said that all this was done to injure Hinduism. We give below a short description of the dialogue that took place then.

Lātu Maharaj: 'My boy, who can harm another's religion? Is faith or religion a matter of externals that others can harm it? All troubles emanate from this wrong notion that religion is rituals, external formalities.'

The devotee: 'Can you discard rituals, Maharaj, altogether from religion? If they are not parts of religion what about the Vedic sacrifices — modern systems of worship in temples, churches etc. and ceremonials and festivals in all religions? If some people oppose these would you still say that they have not laid hands on our religion?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'I don't exactly say that. But as long as you regard faith as consisting of external ceremonies these riots, and killings will continue. Know it for certain and admit it that you have forgotten your real religion, you have lost sight of the kernel and are quarrelling over the husk of religion. Sri Chaitanya introduced the congregational *samkirtana*. What a nice thing it was? Morning and evening — only two times — he asked you to sing Lord's name all together. How many do it? You have given it up. Who teaches a Hindu boy to do anything about his religion? Only some Brahmin boys are taught something. That practice is also waning. What about other Hindu children? You have taken religion as something for the old age. But real religion is not meant for that age. It is impossible to practise religion in old age. In old age your mind is scattered over a hundred and one things; it is then impossible to collect the forces of the mind and get them concentrated on the Lord. It is not the case in childhood and adolescence; your mind is not scattered, it is yet soft and pliant, you can give it any shape you like. Dhruva was five when he saw God. But now no child is taught to take the name of Rama even once a day. You can see for yourself what a dense ignorance has covered our society.'

The following incident is taken from the diary of Bibhutibhushan Maitra; and the event took place at the Sonarpur house in Vāraṇasi.

'One evening Dr. De Mello, who had spent some time at our Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati

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came to Lātu Maharaj. When he came to see Lātu Maharaj the latter was heard saying to himself, "Lord, of course, is without form; but He is with forms too". Strangely enough, that was the thought uppermost in the visitor's mind. So he asked Lātu Maharaj, "If He is with forms, we can surely see Him?"'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Yes, certainly. I am not lying. The Master has said it. Not only that. You can talk with Him.'

Bibhutibabu told us that Lātu Maharaj spoke these words with such great emphasis that they startled all those who were present.

That day the conversation drifted to the topic of meditation. The Doctor said, 'Maharaj, when I was at Mayavati I used to keep a picture of Jesus Christ on my table and meditate on him. One day I saw the picture, moving, it came to life, so to say. All on a sudden that form vanished, and in its stead I saw Sri Ramakrishna, which also disappeared giving place to Sri Buddha, and then Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda). He too disappeared when came a bearded form. Whose it is I do not know as yet. Are these the imaginations of a heated brain or anything like that?'

Lātu Maharaj heard him calmly and said, 'Why imaginations of the brain? They are all true. You are on the right track. Don't give it up. Stick to it. One who has seen one great soul may see many others. Our Master used to have innumerable visions of Rishis, sages, prophets, devas, devis, etc'.

The Doctor: 'Sometimes I am confused, Maharaj. On whom to meditate?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Whom do you love most?'

The Doctor: 'I love Jesus Christ and Sri Ramakrishna equally dearly.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Whom have you been loving all along, i.e. before you came to know of Sri Ramakrishna?'

At this the doctor described a little the history of his family, that for the last four generations they have been Christians. Hearing this Lātu Maharaj advised him to meditate on Christ without the least hesitation. The Doctor went on laying bear his heart to Lātu Maharaj for some time.

Below we give another instance of Lātu Maharaj's catholicity. 'One day two English women came to Lātu Maharaj at Balarambabu's residence. It is said they were atheists. But they were believers in doing good to humanity. Might be they were positivists. They heard of the humanitarian activities of the newly started Ramakrishna Mission. Then the Mission's meetings used to be held at Balarambabu's house. The author played the interpreter that day. The elder one of the English women asked Lātu Maharaj, "To do good to humanity is the ideal of human life. We are one with you regarding this point. But you give a higher place to God, there we differ; we do not like that idea. We hold, God is invisible something; it is doubtful whether He exists at all. What we do not understand of your Mission is, why you preach that people should first have faith in such an unknown and unknowable entity and then do good to humanity."

Lātu Maharaj: 'Those who do not believe in God and try to serve humanity cannot carry on for a long time. Sometime after, this question naturally crops up in their minds: "What benefit do we derive from these so-called humanitarian activities?" And when they reach this stage these activities appear stale to them, they lose interest in their works. And this change is bound to come, it is but natural; for all philanthropic activities entail personal sacrifice. Those who are no believers in God do not find any reason or meaning in such sacrifices.' Hearing this the two ladies laughed out and the younger one said, 'That is no argument, that is no argument'.

Lātu Maharaj: (without turning a hair) 'Will you tell me why do you engage yourselves in these activities?'

The younger lady: 'For the good of others, of course.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'How am I benefited therefrom? Why should I slave for others? What for?'

The elder lady: 'We live in this society. As such we have some duties towards it. Our

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religion is to serve this society. As long as we live in this society we should mutually try to mitigate our sufferings and enlarge the sphere of happiness. That should be the end of our lives.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'There is a higher ideal than what you have said just now. It is (to know and) to fulfil the ideal of our own life. To realize God is the one grand end of human life. He really is wise who has done it or at least tries to do it. To do good to others is after all a social matter. It has no necessary connexion with that highest aim of human life. Moreover, look at it from another point of view. Benefit accrues to those for whom you work. What about yourselves ? How do they benefit you ? Can you explain to me how working for others is profitable to you ?'

At this the ladies blushed and kept mum. Lātu Maharaj went on : 'So you see, there is a loop-hole in your argument, a fallacy. In all arguments, that want to base humanitarian activities on social benefits and leave aside God, you will invariably find some fallacy or other. But once you bring in God the distinction between you and others vanishes, then others become a component part of my self. Though outwardly, i.e., with relation to body, others appear different from me, inwardly, i.e., as *Satchidananda* we are all one ; we don't find any difficulty in understanding and feeling that we are one in God. Then nobody helps another, one that is different from himself, but serves his own self, the abiding part of himself, the better and truer self of himself. Our attitude is plainly this : we go out to serve others, not because there are others who are suffering but because we want to obliterate, blot out, the false distinction that exists between others and myself — and this seeing others as distinct from myself is the root cause of all the evils in society. So to us, to do good to others really means to do good to ourselves — not others but myself. And who is there who would not do good to himself ? Hence if you leave out God, and try to do good to others you may lose your zest for such activities after some time.'

The elder lady : 'One thing in your argument I do not still understand — how can five others become part of me ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'It is not a mere argument — it is a fact. That the multitude, not five or ten, but millions over millions, are parts of one Satchidananda is a fact. The difference lies in names and forms only ; just as one earth is transformed into cups, saucers, and all kinds of earthenwares. Now it is everywhere the same earth, the difference lies in name and form and their use. Their being used in one way or other is immaterial to the thing itself ; and the names and forms, also do not enter into the substance of the things. Similarly you, I, or they are different in our names and forms, in our material bodies, which change every moment we use them ; but the substance is the same and abiding. In this true sense we are all one — one God sporting as many.'

The elder Lady : 'Have you got any proof of this ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Of course. But this proof is not something to be demonstrated to others. It is something which everyone should feel for himself or herself. Take for example the phenomenon of love. Can anybody really demonstrate it to another ? He who loves understands it, and whom he loves understands it too. Do others understand what that attraction is ? Similar is the case with God. The Lord Himself and to whomsoever He shows His favour, alone understand it. Others may not, cannot.'

The elder lady : 'Very nice argument.'

The younger lady : 'Still the question remains unsolved. Take for example the case of one who does not believe in God but does good to others — what about him, will he not get merits out of these ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'You know, every action produces effects — good acts good effects. But these relate to society only. Yes, society is improved. Still man suffers from his false ego, identifies himself with the body. So it does not bring him spiritual progress. When ego is there even meritorious acts bring in bondage, the sense that he is the body does not go. For

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them to do good to others means giving them more creature comforts, necessarily his own good means the same thing, hence bondage. So that kind of philanthropic activity cannot take him away from the wheel of *karma*. Unless our works become absolutely devoid of all motives, our sense of ego will not go, we would continue thinking ourselves as personalities in the midst of other personalities — hence bondage continues. All motives vanish when we and others are rounded up in one vast substance, the Satchidananda, then comes salvation.'

The younger lady: 'I don't understand what you mean by "unmotivated activity". I am yet to see one who does such work. All are actuated by motives — of course, the motive is a noble one in case of philanthropists. But it is surely not an "unmotivated" one.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'We don't go so far as that. When you go to work for others there must be some motive. What we do say is: let the motive be orientated towards God. All cannot see Him; let them have faith in Him — this is necessary. This faith is the cue that will lead you to Him. With this faith in Him let us love His children, work for them. For example, you do some outstanding good work for society. It reaches the Emperor's ears. He calls you and thanks you; you see him. Similarly through the loving service of the Lord's children you get the Lord's grace, you see Him — men are His children.'

What they understood we do not know. Lātu Maharaj purchased Rs. 2/- worth of good mangoes and presented these to them. They accepted them, highly pleased. But from the letter they wrote from Rome, on their way home, it was evident that Lātu Maharaj's words had made a deep impression on their minds.

When those ladies took leave of Lātu Maharaj the present author asked him, 'Perhaps they are satisfied with your argument. But there is one point yet to be discussed: if inside there is one why are there differences outside?'

(To be continued)

RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

(Continued from the previous issue)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

How Raja Yoga Involves the Elements of the Other Yogas

Does *rāja* yoga exclude the essential elements of the other three yogas, namely, *jñāna*, *bhakti* and *karma*? *Rāja* yoga considers possible the inhibition of the modifications of the mind and thereby attain *kaivalya*, where *prakṛti* and its modifications no more bind the *puruṣa*. The yoga system treats *saṁsāra* as the creation of mind and if the mind is controlled, we can control the *saṁsāra*. Therefore to become the master of *saṁsāra* is to become free. But there should be no attachment even to this mastery, otherwise, it cannot be *parā-vairāgya* (*guṇavitṛaṣṇā*) as demanded by Patañjali.

Practice of *rāja* yoga involves the science of discrimination, that is, *jñāna yoga*. We have to inhibit the modifications of our mind to attain the discrimination between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. It is because of the modifications of *citta* that a man is bound to this world. The world has been created both for providing enjoyment of the fruits of his actions and salvation to the *puruṣa* (Y.S. II. 18). Though *citta* creates bondage, yet, it also provides suitable experience for his liberation. *Citta* which is the cause of attachment is also the

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most predominant force for detachment. Therefore, to provide correct knowledge of *prakṛti* and its evolutes is the aim of *rāja yoga*.

Bondage, according to a *jñāna yogin*, is due to ignorance of our own true Self or Ātman. The Self is all-comprehensive, and philosophically speaking there is no distinction between man and man. The sense of distinction is created due to *māyā*. When this veil of ignorance or *māyā* is removed by knowledge we recognize our true Self. Thus the importance of the attainment of discrimination between the Self and not-self is recognized by both *rāja yoga* and *jñāna yoga*. But *rāja yoga* first demands practice of the *aṣṭānga yoga*, then understanding; while a *jñāna yogin* will first demand understanding and then practice. But neither of them exclude the other; the question is one of priority. The selection of one or the other depends on the nature and the temperament of the aspirant. The difference of viewpoint in them is the point of psychological emphasis in the two paths, leading to the same goal, i.e., salvation of the soul.

Patañjali has said that as a result of the observance of all the stages of yoga, spiritual-sense (*adhyātma prasāda*) dawns on the aspirant and then he develops the capacity to see the truth only (Y.S. I. 47 & 48). It clearly means that, according to Patañjali, a sense of discrimination between truth and falsehood comes only in *nirvicārā samādhi* which can be attained only after the observance of all the various stages of yoga. Therefore, we say that a *rāja yogin* has to develop this sense of discrimination which is also the aim of a *jñāna yogin*. Thus, *rāja yoga* implies the presence of the essential elements of *jñāna yoga* also.

Rāja yoga involves also the elements of *bhakti yoga*. *Bhakti yoga* is the path of emotion. Emotions give a natural basis of sociability or unsociability for which intellect provides only the reason. Sociability means treating others as ourselves. The virtue of sociability is gained to a higher and higher degree as the scope of persons, whom we are treating as our alter-egos, gets wider and wider. Thus, *bhakti* provides a way to identify the presence of God in all. This ideal has been mentioned in the *Gītā* as *sarva bhūta hite ratāḥ*. But if emotions have a regress towards egoism, they become the basis of an unsocial tendency and create bondage for us. Love and hatred are two extremes on the emotional plane. *Bhakti* expects us to go towards love. Nārada calls *bhakti* as the very embodiment of love, form of immortality and an end by itself (N.B. Sūtra 2, 3, 26).

Patañjali has made it clear that the modifications of the mind may be painful and not-painful (I. 5); and all non-painful modifications are, in the beginning, not to be curbed but developed and when their purpose is served, they too will have to be renounced. He has also advocated the cultivation of friendship, kindness, happiness and indifference (I. 33) for the purification of mind. This shows that the emotions are not to be repressed but sublimated. He also speaks of faith as a means to concentration (I. 20). Faith is the first stage in every activity, may it be worldly or spiritual. There should be a perfect faith in the teachings of the teacher. Devotion to God has also been recognized as a means to concentration (I. 23). All these, taken together, mean that *rāja yoga* assumes the elements of *bhakti yoga* too. There is no difference between a true yogin and a true *bhakta*. The practice of *rāja yoga* creates intense concentration on God, in the same way as *bhakti* brings intense attachment to God. This intensity of love for God means that all the other tendencies of the mind have been completely overcome. There is no place for any object except God in the heart of a *bhakta*. Thus *rāja yoga* involves the essential elements of *bhakti* too.

Patañjali talks about *kriyā yoga* and includes in it *tapas*, study of religious books and surrendering of fruits of actions to God. If we follow *kriyā* or *karma yoga*, the practice of *samādhi* will be easier and pain-bearing obstructions will be minimised (Y.S. II. 1, 2). *Karma yoga* aims at the desireless and non-attached action. Active we have to be,

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because we cannot help it, but we should be unattached and desireless and all the fruits of our actions are to be surrendered to God. A yogin cannot advance in his practices without this attitude of non-attachment.

Activities in *jīvanmuktāvasthā* are for *lokasaṁgraha*, they are above merit and demerit. They do not perturb the equilibrium of the mind of the doer, but under the force of *prārabdha* actions are to be performed. This is the stage attained in *saṁprajñāta samādhi*. In *rāja yoga*, *sabīja samādhi* contains seeds of actions and, therefore, activity becomes not only essential, but we have to reap the fruits of our past actions. In order to break even this, we have to proceed further to *asaṁprajñāta samādhi* or *nirbīja samādhi*, wherein all seeds of actions are burnt. We will not act, then, under the force of the Law of Karma. At this stage, if the activities are performed, they will be for the greatest good of all without touching the doer in any way. Therefore, the attitude of desirelessness and non-attachment demanded of a *karma yogin* is an essential ingredient in *rāja yoga* also.

CONCLUSION

Rāja yoga starts with the idea of the practice of *aṣṭānga yoga* to attain equilibrium of the mind. It is no theory, but all action. These practices give innumerable *siddhis*, but they are to be treated not as an end but as a means only. They are to be renounced in favour of full salvation. M. M. Pandit Gopinath Kaviraja says that even Īśvarahood is to be renounced, then *kaivalya* can be attained. Īśvara too is associated with *prakṛti*. Therefore, to be pure-consciousness even this stage is to be dissolved. There is no *vibhūti* above Īśvara. If and when even this stage is renounced, then alone, perfect salvation becomes a possibility. It is needless to add here that we cannot imagine a personality more perfect than Īśvara. Thus *rāja yoga* enables a man to perfect his personality and it gives the fullest scope for perfection till *Puruṣahood* is attained.

(*Concluded*)

THE NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN

The Gita-View (In its own words)

P. NAGARAJA RAO

THE average man of today is unaware of his real nature. The fundamental ignorance of his true nature is responsible for his bondage and suffering, i.e. *samsāra*. He does not know that he is essentially the *Spirit*, an immortal soul, made in the image of God, eternal, immutable and is of the essence of Knowledge and Bliss and Consciousness. The Spirit, i.e. the soul of man is mistaken for the body, the senses and mind; and all that happens to the body, mind and senses are felt as the experiences of man. Hence, man experiences sorrow, pain and occasional joys.

The identification of soul with body, senses and mind is due to the limitation of man's venues of knowledge. He relies only on *sense perception*, and *reasoning* based on it. The two instruments disclose the identity of the soul with senses and mind. Experiences like, 'I am stout', 'I am miserable', 'I am rich', arise. To know the real distinction between the soul and the body and senses, one has to acquire faith in scripture, and its deliverances. Scripture teaches, through the channel of the *guru* that the soul is distinct from the perishable body (see XVI. 23-24).

The soul is never born, it never dies, nor having once been, does it again cease to be. Unborn, eternal, permanent, primeval, it is not slain, when the body is slain. (II. 20).

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To know the real nature of the Self and its indwelling presence is the aim of life. 'Having come into this fleeting life and unhappy world, do thou worship Me,' (IX. 33) says Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Why worship Him? The answer is, by *His grace* we get our ignorance destroyed; overcome conflicts, tensions and recover the true nature of our self and enjoy peace and bliss and not get caught up in the cycle of births and deaths.

'Having found refuge in Me, he reaches by My grace the eternal and the indestructible abode' (XVIII. 56).

'Fixing his thought the (devotee) surmounts every difficulty by My grace; but if from self-conceit he will not listen to Me he shall utterly perish' (XVIII. 58).

'Having become one with God and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. He regards all beings alike' (XVIII. 54).

'By His grace the devotee attains supreme peace and everlasting abode' (XVIII. 62).

'This is wisdom, more secret than all secrets that have been declared to Arjuna' (*guhyāt guhyataraṁ mayā*).

'Consider it fully and act on it as thou wilt' (*yathecchasi tathā kuru*).

'Listen again to My supreme word, the most secret of all. Thou art well beloved of Me, therefore will I tell thee what is good for thee' (*śṛnu me paramam vacaḥ, iṣṭo asi mé*).

'Fix Thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, prostrate thyself before Me, so shalt thou come to Me. I promise thee truly, for thou art dear to Me'.

'Surrendering all duties come to Me alone for shelter. Do not grieve, for I will release thee from all sins' (XVIII. 63, 64, 65, 66) (*mā śuca*).

The grace of the Lord is given to the devotees and the Lord bestows understanding and dispels the darkness in the soul.

'On those who are devoted to Me and worship Me in love I bestow the understanding by which they come to Me'.

'Out of compassion for them I dwell in their hearts and dispel the darkness born of ignorance by the shining lamp of wisdom' (X. 10-11) (*dadāmi buddhiyogaṁ taṁ . . . ahaṁ ajñānajam tamaḥ nāśayāmi ātmabhavastho jñānadīpena bhāsvatā*).

To secure the Lord's grace the principal method advocated is Bhakti. It is the sovereign road, easy and the most effective.

Speaking about *Bhakti* the Lord says:

'Neither by Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by alms-giving nor yet by sacrifices can the Lord be seen'. 'By devotion to Him alone, can He be known, truly seen and entered into' (XI. 53-54) (*bhaktyā ananyayā śakya*).

The Lord not only by His grace gives *moksha* to the devotee, he also bestows on him all his needs, during his worldly life.

'Those who meditate on Me and worship . . . their welfare rests in Me' (IX. 22) (*yoga kṣemaṁ vahāmi ahaṁ*).

'Proclaim it boldly, O son of Kunti that My devotees never perish' (IX. 31) (*na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*).

Before practising devotion to the Lord, a sound preparation is necessary and is the precondition of Bhakti. Love of God pre-supposes the destruction of the ego. If His kingdom is to come, our silly kingdoms must go. The preliminary stages are sense-control, through personal effort, and prayerful devotion to the Lord. The doors to Hell are three. 'Three are gate-ways to Hell leading to the ruin of the soul — lust, wrath and greed (*kāma, krodha, lobha*). Therefore let man renounce these three' (XVI. 21) (*trividhaṁ narakasyedaṁ, dvāram naśanam ātmanaḥ — kāmaḥ, krodhaḥ tathā lobhaḥ*).

The devotee must integrate himself at three levels (in the words of Professor D. S. Sarma). He must bring his senses under the control of his mind. He must inetgrate his living by love and ethical life with his fellow men. To do this he must integrate his life with the Lord through devotion. To effect the integration with fellow men he must act, for *loka samgraha* (welfare of all) and for the good of all

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living beings (*sarva bhūta hité rataḥ*).

This path is described as Karma Yoga. The Karma Yogin must have faith in scripture, the scripture-taught reality, through the guru; he must lead an active normal life — follow his *svadharmā* as defined by scriptures and determined by his *svabhāva*, in a spirit of dedication, without any selfish desires.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Nikhilananda, the Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, gave a talk over the telephone to the students of the Huntington University at Sudsbury, Ontario, Canada. The Swami was seated in his own room in New York. After the talk a student asked a question. The article 'Rebirth and Liberation' comprises the text of the talk of the Swami, the question by the student, as also the answer given by the Swami.

We are grateful to the President, ADVAITA ASHRAMA, CALCUTTA, for having given us his permission to publish the extracts from the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by Romain Rolland in the present form: 'A Rhapsody on Vivekananda'. The part of culling and presenting the article has been done by Sri R. Ramakrishna, M.A., L.T., the Headmaster of N. N. R. High School, Nangavaram.

Sri P. Seshadri, a devotee with associations with the Ramakrishna Order for a long time, has translated the two letters from the two disciples of the Master about the passing away of Swami Vivekananda.

Prof. G. N. Mathrani is from Elphinstone College, Bombay.

Br. Sudhangshu is of the Ramakrishna Order.

Sri T. R. Rajagopala Aiyar is an advocate from Cauvery Nagar, Trichy Dt., and has contributed to the *Vedanta Kesari* on some earlier occasions also.

'Raja-Yoga — Restated' by Prof. Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore, is the sixth and the last instalment of the series.

Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao is Professor of Philosophy, Sri Venkateshwara University, Tirupati.

THERE IS NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY

India has an uneasy ceasefire on its borders. The ceasefire is conspicuous more in its violations than its observance. Recent trends show that the present rulers of Pakistan have not given up their inimical attitude to India. Pakistan seems to be strengthening her war-machine. Here is a report which speaks for itself.

New Delhi, Dec. 22.

Informed sources here believed that the Government of India is fully aware of the presence of an Indonesian flotilla in Karachi although an attempt had been made to explain that the vessels were there in connection with an impending Pak-Indonesia joint naval exercise.

Pakistan has already one submarine given to it under the military pact with the United States.

The sources also said that Pakistan had embarked upon an expansion of its army by adding three more divisions even before it launched the attack on India in September. The expansion which would take the strength of Pakistan's army to over three lakhs, is now being speeded [up] with the help of China.

A report carried by the London *Times* says that Indonesia is believed to have lent Pakistan a flotilla of six Russian-built craft including two submarines. — PTI.*

In the face of such information India can scarcely afford to be complacent.

* *The Hindu*, December 23, 1965.

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REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A RECORD OF BUDDHISTIC KINGDOMS: Translated by James Legge. Pub. Paragon Book Reprint Corp., New York. Dollars 1.75.

Fa-hien was a great scholar who was sent by the emperor of China in 399 A.D. to India in order to secure authentic versions of Buddhist texts since Buddhism in China at that time was in a very confused state of affairs. This book is a translation of the record left by that scholar in Chinese, of his fourteen year journey across the overland route. The author describes the countries (30 of them) which he had to cross, the peoples he met, the legends and the customs in the different countries and his labours in Central India for copying out the text of Vinaya-pitika. From India he went to Ceylon, studied the institutions of the Buddhists in that country and embarked on a sea voyage back home via Java. His description of the dangers to which they were exposed in the rough seas and his hair-breadth escape from the anger of his co-passengers, who wanted to throw him overboard as the sole possible cause of their misfortunes, the tensions he underwent while saving the bundles of his precious manuscripts when every-one had to throw out heavy cargo, are all vividly portrayed.

The book contains a conscientious translation into English by James Legge, exhaustive notes and the full text in Chinese. Both as history and a travelogue the book is superb.

M. P. PANDIT.

ON NEHRU: By Radhakrishnan. Pub. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi-6. Pp. 70. Price Rs 1.50.

In this collection of the speeches and messages of Dr. Radhakrishnan since the passing of Pandit Nehru, up-to-date, there is a happy informal delineation of the character and personality of the departed leader.

Observes the President: 'Someone said he was an agnostic Lenin, following a Christian Tolstoy. This is a misrepresentation. He sometimes called himself a pagan. That showed his opposition to the prevalent religious beliefs and practices. But he was, deep down, an essentially religious man. He believed in a God of reason, in a religion which commended itself to reason. I remember a meeting which was held in the Rashtrapati Bhavan for the presentation of Sri Aurobindo's portrait. There he sat silent, with closed eyes, pondering over the deepest values of life for nearly ten minutes. On the occasion, I said a few words about a passage in Upanishad regarding the nature of Absolute Reality to be attained by rational thinking and spiritual insight. Human beings of great intellectual power have doubts, divisions and discords. The rational man has to grow into the spiritual man. That is the task set to each individual if he is to fulfil his destiny as a human being. This account in the Upanishad was the essence of Science and Philosophy. What else is there, he said.'

In another place he writes: 'I saw him deeply moved on a few occasions. One was when he was awarded the BHARATA RATNA. He spoke one or two sentences and sat down. Similarly, when he referred to the bypassing of Sela and the Chinese entry into Bomdila he was moved beyond measure.'

M. P. PANDIT.

1. SPEECHES OF PRIME MINISTER LAL BAHADUR SASTRI. Pp. 156. Price Rs 4.50.
2. WHEN FREEDOM IS MENACED. Pp. 79. Price Re 1.

Both published by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi-6.

The first compilation brings together certain speeches of the Prime Minister, who besides being an exemplar of plain living and high thinking, has exhibited great skill and ability as administrator of the country. The speeches are as a rule simple, direct and forceful, and not mere clap-trap oratory. Cold logic is their forte. But not seldom has he risen to poetic heights, as for instance in his exhortation to Viswa Bharati students (89 to 91), and to businessmen (124).

The second publication is a collection of his speeches and broadcasts during the recent emergency and the letters exchanged with the Secretary General of the U.N. Assembly. They reveal him as an unusually soft spoken statesman who could however be, if national integrity and safety were concerned, as hard as steel.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

INDIAN MUSLIMS SPEAK: Pub. Publications Division. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi-6. Pp. 44. Not for sale.

It is a matter for no small satisfaction that the mad fury and war cries of Pakistan have left the Indian Muslims unmoved. A very eminent educationist has warned that 'Jehad' by Pakistan would not go unpunished and that the Indian Army has become the chosen instrument of God. This brochure contains the photographs of the three noble young Muslim warriors who had routed the enemy and its war material.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

1. THE PARADOX OF INDIA PAKISTAN RELATIONS: Pp. 48. Price 25 Paise.
2. LET PAKISTAN SPEAK FOR HERSELF: Pp. 32.
3. PAKISTAN'S NEW ATTEMPT TO GRAB KASHMIR: Pp. 27. Price 25 Paise.

All published by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi-6.

In all modern wars, truth is said to be the first casualty, and in the recent one between India and Pakistan, our country had to reckon not only with

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the armed might of its enemy, but also with its unscrupulous propaganda machine. Pamphlet No. 2 sets out in all their hideousness, the blood curdling words and phrases which had been employed by Pakistan press. The first brochure sets out clearly and cogently the events leading to the creation of Pakistan and its inimical hostility towards India — (an exact replica of the hatred which Kauravas had entertained against the Pandavas) — (p. 42). The third pamphlet portrays tellingly the treacherous suddenness with which the Pakistani troops had invaded Kashmir in September this year.

These publications are very well conceived, and written in a simple yet forcible style, are extremely helpful to understand and appreciate India's case against her unfriendly neighbour.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

MAHATMA GANDHI AS A STUDENT: Compiled and edited by J. M. Upadhyaya. Pub. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi-6. Pp. 84. Price Rs 1.75.

This small book treats of the boyhood of a great man, and has been prepared after years of tireless and devoted labour. Though an average and mediocre student, who had once failed in the examination, still his conduct was recorded as 'very good'. He was 'above lying and deception' and refused to be stampeded into stating an untruth (p. 30). He became indispensable to his ailing father, who predicted that he would 'bring credit to his family'. The Mahatma's early years in England had really been a formative period. His passion for vegetarianism grew there. It was in England that he took to the *Bhagavad Gita* at the instance of two Theosophists, and learnt to appreciate all that was good in Hinduism.

The book is extremely well written and is of perennial worth and value.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

MODERN GREEK FOLKLORE AND ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION: By John Cuthbert Lawson. Pp. 620. Price $ 10.00. Pub: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York, U.S.A.

This is a sumptuously produced edition of a classical treatise by the author, published originally in 1910, which sought to present the essentials of Greek religion in its true perspective. The author had summed up his conclusions slowly on personal investigation and verification. Greek religion, he established, had no founder or literature or even professional theologians, but had to be discovered from among the beliefs, doctrines and even superstitions of the common people. He has set down the rationale of many a religious and superstitious rite, and has recounted numerous anecdotes, peasant tales and esoteric rites as well as the Greek religious customs. It could be said literally that he found tongues in trees, and books in the running brooks. To the modern reader, as well as to the avowed votary of Hindu religion, a close parallelism is discernible between the Greecian and the Hindu conception of life and death (p. 434). The Yajna of the Hindus is practically identical with the 'sacramental Sacrifice' which is described on p. 338. Many of the popular beliefs, omens, vows and superstitions which are current even today in our country appear to have prevailed amongst them (p. 328). There is also a striking similarity in respect of marriage and marriage-rites (p. 592).

Altogether a fascinating account of an ancient religion and theology, the esoteric features of which could still be detected in a modern religion and philosophy. Indeed, as the author rightly concludes (p. 605) even the highest aspirations of the most spiritually minded of Pagan thinkers, owed much to the purely popular religion.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

OSIRIS: By S. A. Wallis Budge. Pub: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York, U.S.A. Vol. I. Pp. 404 and Vol. II. 440. Price $ 15.00.

This is a magnificent production. The author after a lifetime of study and research, has presented here the source of the fundamental beliefs of the indigeneous Religion of Ancient Egypt. The central figure of the ancient Egyptian religion was OSIRIS whose cult has been set down in detail after examining the native literature which has so long been unavailable to the scholars on the subject. The Egyptians had believed in the existence of God Almighty and maintained that His behests were performed by a number of 'gods' or angels. The magical rites and ceremonies of all kinds had also a spiritual background. The cult of Osiris had been responsible for weaning away the people from cannibalism and cruel and barbarous customs, and for inculcating respect to human life. Man was regarded as the image of God. The hierarchy consisted of a god, and a priesthood. Belief in divine incarnation, resurrection and immortality, an existence of heaven for righteous people, had been its other features.

It is interesting to note that the ancient religion of Egypt revered the Sun, Moon, Air, Water, Sky, Earth and Nile as gods besides a host of spirits. It was not, however, a polytheistic cult, because the Egyptians believed in the existence of 'One Great God' self-produced, self-existent, almighty and eternal, who created the 'gods', the heavens, and the sun, moon and stars in them, and the earth and everything on it including man and beast, bird, fish and reptile. Of this God they never attempted to make any figure, form, 'likeness for they thought that no man could depict or describe Him and that all His attributes were quite beyond man's comprehension', all of which describe equally well the Brahman in Hindu conception. It is easy to discover the close affinity or parallelism between the tenets of the Hindu Vedanta and many of the cults portrayed in this book.

The female counterpart of Osiris had been the goddess Isis. These two, the author rightly points out (293. Vol. II) had by their sufferings, revived and increased the faith of the common people in God and in the reality of spiritual things, which the teachings of philosophers had destroyed in their hearts, as well as the need to forsake sin and attain purity in word and deed.

It is impossible to close the review of this encyclopaedic work without praise and admiration for the labour and scholarship that had gone into

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its production; and one can scarcely resist the feeling that a similar survey on such colossal lines, should be undertaken for studying the ancient religious sects of this country.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

PSYCHICS INTERNATIONAL: An International Quarterly of Psychic and Yogic Research, Moradabad (India). Special Number devoted to PSYCHOSYNTHESIS, Volume 11, Number 2, August 1965.

This special number is devoted to PSYCHOSYNTHESIS — a concept coined by Robert Assagioli of Italy. Academic Psychology has no doubt made very rapid strides in this century and has almost come on a par with the biological sciences, but the dogged determination with which it has stuck to empiricism and its studied avoidance of concepts savouring of self or soul has been disturbing to scholars who have been systematizing their knowledge of self. The conclusion is irresistible that the investigations of the modern psychologists regarding human nature have not been profound and that a rooted distrust of extra-empirical concepts in psychology is not the correct way of profitably studying man. Though the "depth" and "height" psychologies make amends to some extent to correct this imbalance, it is not enough and the study of psychology should be entirely reoriented on sounder lines. The unconscious and superconscious phases of man's personality have to be very closely investigated and co-ordinated with our present knowledge of human nature. Dr B. L. Atreya in the editorial says that psychosynthesis should be supplemented by Vedanta and Yoga which have much in common with the former. The final goal of all these three is the same. The aim of this new psychology is to cure all the evils of life and to enable one to live a completely synthesised life and with full satisfaction. The special number contains in all 13 contributions excluding the editorial and these give the reader a fairly comprehensive idea of the theoretical and practical implications of psychosynthesis. Four of these are from the original architect himself. Prof Prakash Atreya studies Indian and Western concepts of human personality and co-ordinates the conclusions of the ancient science of Atma Vidya with psychology and asserts that India has taken the term personality as including body, mind and self and is thus more comprehensive than Western psychology. However a word of caution is necessary in this context about the strict necessity of subjecting to a severe scrutiny every method and technique employed in the investigation of this comprehensive science. The results must be co-ordinated and studied without any bias either scientific or extra-scientific. Otherwise the new science of Psychosynthesis is likely to become shallow and superficial without any relevance to human experience.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

BENGALI

AVATAR-SANGINI: By Swami Divyatmananda. Publishers: Mitra and Ghose, 10, Samacharan Dey Street, Calcutta-12. Pp. 71. Price Rs 2.00.

Introducing this work the author draws pointed attention to the remarks of Swami Vivekananda on the importance of the *shakti* concept in the Indian tradition and the decline that has come over the civilization of the Indian peoples following the neglect of the womanhood of the land.

To illustrate the mighty role played by women in the spiritual and material history of India, Swami Divyatmananda gives in this book short, illustrated, readable accounts of Sati, Sita, Radha, Yashodhara, Vishnupriya and Sri Saradamani.

The book is well-written and deserves wide reading.

M. P. PANDIT.

MALAYALAM

ADIKAVIYUTE ADARSAPURUSHAN: By Swami Siddhinathananda, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur, Kerala. Pp. 228. Price Rs. 3.

This is a very abridged narration of the original Valmiki Ramayana. The author has profusely quoted the choicest slokas from the original which add charm and force to the narration. It is also a critical review of the great epic since it abounds in commentaries and interpretations. The author has dealt in detail with some of the controversial topics in the Ramayana, for instance, Sri Rama's killing of Vali, His exiling Sita to the forest etc. In the end, while summing up, the author discusses the part that this great epic has played in moulding the destiny of millions of our countrymen and the moral values it contains. The language is chaste and classical.

MALATI KERALA VARMA.

BOOKS RECEIVED

AT THY FEET: By P. V. Bobde. Published by the author, 36, Rambag, Indore (M.P.). Pp. 74. Price Rs. 2.

PALMISTRY MADE SIMPLE: By J. S. Bright. Pub. Jaico Publishing House, 125, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Fort, Bombay-1. Pp. 261. Price Rs. 3.

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NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

Holy Mother's Birthday Celebrations

The 113th birthday *tithipuja* of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother was observed at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on Tuesday, December 14, 1965. The day started with Mangalarati and Bhajan in the shrine at 5 a.m. followed by Vedic chanting. Worship in the Shrine started at 7-30 a.m. and came to a close at 12-30 p.m. About 700 devotees attended the function.

In the evening after Arati, there was reading from the life of Holy Mother, after which Swami Kailasananda spoke for about half an hour.

The public meeting was held on December 19, 1965 at the Vivekananda Hall, in the Math premises. There was Harikatha by Brahmasri T. S. Balakrishna Sastrigal on *Lalitopakhyanam*. which started at 3 p.m. The meeting started at 5-15 p.m. with an opening song and was presided over by Swami Kailasananda.

Swami Nandananda spoke in Telugu, Swami Somananda in Tamil, and Swami Vimalananda in English on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother. Prizes were then distributed to pupils who were adjudged to have topped the list in the elocution and other competitions that were held in connection with the Mother's birthday. The President then addressed the audience, after which the meeting came to a close.

There was *Kalikirtan* led by Swami Privananda. for about half an hour in the Math Hall after the meeting had concluded. With the distribution of prasad to the assembled devotees the function came to a close.

Christ Jayanti

The Christmas Eve was observed at the Math as in other years on December 24, 1965. A large picture of Jesus was tastefully decorated in the Math Hall. After the usual evening prayer the function started at 7 p.m. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the speaker and the gathering, after which a few passages from the Bible regarding the birth and teachings of Jesus were read out by Swami Abjananda. Dr Santhosham of Madras then spoke on the significance of the birth of Jesus Christ for nearly an hour. Swami Abjananda proposed a vote of thanks.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

Report for 1964.

The Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore runs a Library and Reading Room at No. 9, Norris Road, a Boys' Home at 179, Bartley Road and two Primary Schools at 38, Norris Road.

During the year 385 new books were added to the Library; 700 books were issued to members; 2,463 persons made use of the Library and Reading Room; total number of books at the end of the year was 4,959. In the Reading Room were made available 52 journals and 8 daily newspapers.

Weekly scriptural classes were conducted. Swami Siddhatmananda gave lectures at various places including the University of Singapore. A Sunday Class for children was also conducted at 179, Bartley Road.

The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda were observed with special programme of Puja, discourses and devotional songs. Other sacred occasions like Rama Navami and Krishna Jayanti were also observed with due solemnity.

In the year under review the Vivekananda Tamil School (in the morning session) had 72 boys and 64 girls on its roll and the Sarada Devi Tamil School had 145 girls on its roll (in the afternoon session). In the Secondary School Entrance Examination the schools secured 72% passes in 1964.

There were three night classes in English and two in Tamil with a total enrolment of 53 pupils.

The Boys' Home situated at 179, Bartley Road had 55 inmates, their ages ranging from 8 to 17 years. The boys are brought up in a spiritual atmosphere.

The advisory committee thanks the donors, subscribers, members and well-wishers for their support.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SOCIETY, RANGOON, (BURMA)

The Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon, runs a Library and Reading Room. The Library had at the end of 1964, 44,741 books of which 4,000 were added during the year. 30,537 books were issued during the period.

The Reading Room received 16 dailies and 98 periodicals. The daily average attendance was 400.

The Society held 271 scripture classes during the year. Twice a week a Sanskrit Language class was conducted by an experienced and qualified Sanskrit teacher. The Society organized 58 periodical public lectures on religious and cultural subjects by accredited representatives of different religious sects and important persons in the cultural life of different communities in Burma, as also others. It also organized 8 Musical Evenings by leading musicians of the city and one symposium on a cultural topic.

The Managing Committee express their thanks to their numerous friends, well-wishers, sympathizers, supporters, devotees, subscribers and donors for the various kinds of help and services rendered to the Society.

The 104th Birthday Tithipuja of Swami Vivekananda falls on Thursday, January 13, 1966.

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SRIMAT SWAMI YATISWARANANDAJI MAHARAJ
VICE-PRESIDENT, SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH & MISSION

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LII | FEBRUARY 1966 | No. 10

MAHASAMADHI

It is with deep sorrow that we have to announce the passing away of His Holiness Srimat Swami Yatiswaranandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, at 1-15 a.m. on the 27th January 1966.

The Swami, known as Suresh Chandra Bhattacharji in his pre-monastic life, was born in January, 1889 in a village named Nandanpur in the district of Pabna (East Pakistan). After passing the B.A. Examination from the Calcutta University in which he secured a gold medal for standing first in Sanskrit, he joined the Ramakrishna Order at the Belur Math in 1911 at the age of 22. He was an initiated disciple of Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, and was invested with Sannyasa by him in 1917 in Madras.

For more than half a century Swami Yatiswarananda served the Ramakrishna Organization in various capacities such as the editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* and the *Vedanta Kesari* for several years, the President of the Bombay Ashrama for about a year, of the Madras Math from 1926 to 1933, and of the Bangalore Ashrama from 1951, a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Mission from 1928, and the Vice-President of the Organisation from 1962. Besides, he preached Vedanta in Germany, Switzerland, Holland, France and England from 1933 to 1939 and thereafter in the U.S.A. up to 1950.

Returning to India in 1950 from the U.S.A. via Europe, he became the President of the Bangalore Ashrama in 1951 which post he held till the last day of his life. In view of his sterling spiritual attainments, winning manners, feeling heart and catholic views, he was followed devotedly by a large number of disciples in India and abroad.

Of late the Swami had been suffering from various ailments and was brought down to the Belur Math for treatment from Bangalore about six weeks ago. On the 24th January he had to be admitted to the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta owing to a sudden flare up of diabetic condition accom-

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panied by many other complications. These developed into a diabetic coma, to which he succumbed, in spite of the best possible medical care. His body was brought to the Belur Math at about 7 a.m. and the last rites were performed there at noon of the 27th January, 1966, which was attended by a large number of monks and devotees who cherish his sacred memory with great love and honour.

The Swami was an impressive speaker and writer and had a few scholarly books to his credit.

In his passing away many of his disciples and others who were spiritually benefited by coming in contact with him both in India and outside India will immensely feel the loss of their friend, philosopher and guide.

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

वायोर्दशांशतो न्यूनो वह्निर्वायौ प्रकल्पितः । पुराणोक्तं तारतम्यं दशांशैर्भूतपञ्चके ॥ ८८ ॥

Vahni, fire ; *vāyoḥ*, than air ; *daśāṁśataḥ*, ten times ; *nyūnaḥ*, less ; *vāyau*, in air ; *prakalpitaḥ*, ascertained ; *bhūtapañcake*, in the five elements ; *daśāṁśaiḥ*, by a tenth part ; *tāratamyaṁ*, difference ; *purāṇoktaṁ*, has been told in the Puranas.

88. Fire has been ascertained in air as a tenth part of it. This estimation of difference has been stated in the Puranas, i.e. each element is one tenth part of the previous element.

वह्निरुष्णः प्रकाशात्मा पूर्वानुगतिरत्र च । अस्ति वह्निः स निस्तत्त्वः शब्दवान् स्पर्शवानपि ॥८९॥

Vahniḥ, fire ; *uṣṇaḥ prakāśātmā*, is of the nature of heat and light ; *atra ca*, even in this (*agni*) ; *pūrvānugatiḥ*, the continuity of (the preceding natures) ; (*dṛśyate*, is perceived) ; *vahniḥ*, this fire ; *asti*, exists ; *sa nistatvaḥ*, it is unreal ; *śabdavān*, with sound ; *sparśavānapi*, also with the quality of touch.

89. The fire is of the nature of heat and light. Even in this fire is to be seen the continuity of the natures of its causes — (as can be seen from the expressions) fire exists, it is unreal, has the quality of sound and touch.

सन्मायाव्योमवाय्वंशैर्युक्तस्याग्नेर्निजो गुणः । रूपं तत्र सतः सर्वमन्यद्बुद्ध्या विविच्यताम् ॥९०॥

Sat māyā-vyoma-vāyvamśaiḥ, with the ingredients of Brahman, *māyā*, ether, and air ; *yuktasya*, united ; *agneḥ*, of fire ; *nijaḥ*, its own ; *guṇaḥ*, quality ; *rūpaṁ*, form ; *tatra*, these natures ; *sataḥ*, from Reality ; *anyat*, other than ; *sarvaṁ*, everything ; *buddhyā*, by discrimination (intelligence); *vivicyatāṁ*, be separated.

90. United with the natures of Reality, *māyā*, ether and air is the fire's own quality of form. Separate Reality from every other of these natures.[1]

[1] All others have no real existence when they are separated from Brahman.

(*Continued on page* 422)

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HOW TO PUT PAIN TO A BENEFICIAL USE

As adversity proves the mettle of man pain brings him out in his true colours, as it were. It is at a time when man is overwhelmed with pain, physical or mental, that one can gauge his character. High sounding philosophy one may preach but how one lives it in life and that too when overcome by calamities does in a great measure sum him up. None can deny that this world is an experience of pairs of opposites, love and hatred, pleasure and pain, sympathy and jealousy, co-operation and competition and so on. One of these pairs is acceptable but the other is unpalatable. The wheel of time, however, stops not to suit anyone's taste. It moves on and along with it sorrow and happiness too move into every man's life in succession, sometimes in rapid movement, sometimes slowly. There is no escape from this wheel for anyone.

Every one knows this : knows that youth and vigour are short-lived, that death succeeds birth as sure as night follows day. But the atheist, the agnostic and the materialist tell us to 'make hay while the sun shines', enjoy most when you can. They, however, forget or deliberately omit to add, 'and suffer while you cannot'. Aye, that is a verifiable phenomenon. Man is not even able to suffer patiently, having spent all his energy in enjoyment. If we keep open our eyes and ears and observe, we shall find how those who rush madly into the vortex of unbridled enjoyment find themselves left high and dry by the very senses that dragged them into it, when suffering relentlessly pursues them. Man's senses are like the fair-weather friends, letting you to fend for yourself when misery overtakes you ; that is to say, pursuit of pleasure improverishes man and makes him unfit to face life as it changes, — the least pain, the least misery, exasperates him.

Again, as we have already seen, the very texture of this web of life is such that misery and happiness form its warp and woof and one cannot exist without the other. Pain cannot be ignored, for it presses itself on to the forefront and makes itself felt. Denying it has no meaning, nor suffering it as an inevitable evil bring us any credit. In an age where utility takes the pride of place among the incentives to man's action he must try to see what best use he can make of pain. To what use can misery be put ? When we know it is sure to come in spite of all our efforts to avoid it, we must get prepared to accept it with equanimity. How can this be done ? By remembering that pain, like pleasure, is shortlived and bearing it without much ado, by taking it in our stride. That is what Sri Krishna taught Arjuna. 'The sense contacts, O Arjuna, result in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, but they are coming and going and are impermanent, therefore endure them.'[1] This endurance (*titikṣa*) is one of the six qualities that are mentioned by the seers as the equipment that is incumbent in our journey towards the Highest. Endurance has been defined as, 'bearing of all afflictions without caring to redress them and at the same time being free from anxiety or lament on their account'.[2] If it is asked how to reach such a state when we are in the region of its antipodes, there is but one answer. And that is : by practice. We may remind ourselves of what Sri Krishna told Arjuna regarding the control of the mind : *abhyāsa* and *Vairāgya*, practice and detachment, he said, were the only way to do it. In every way of life, in every pursuit it is practice that makes us perfect. If you want to swim no amount of reading books on swimming can help you to learn it. One

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[1] मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्ण सुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यान्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ।
— *Gita*, II. 14.

[2] सहनं सर्वदुःखानामप्रतीकारपूर्वकम् ।
चिन्ताविलापरहितं सा तितिक्षा निगद्यते ।
— *Vivekacudamani*, 24.

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must get into water and struggle. A life-belt may help you in the beginning but if you depend on it always you may not drown but you will never learn to swim. A strong desire backed by immense exertion alone can achieve success in any walk of life. So also is the case with a religious aspirant. For him practice of virtues is a supreme necessity, being a step forward towards his goal. Now, to reach that state of calm acceptance or indifference to pain and pleasure we have to fall back upon something which we know to be more than all these little flashes of joys and sorrows, to be everlasting, eternal. But simple knowledge alone does not help. An awareness of that spirit in every day life and faith in its redeeming power are also necessary.

Pain makes us aware that life in this world is not a smooth sailing; there are tempests and gales which are to be faced. It makes us conscious that there is a power which is beyond all comprehension, yet controls our destiny. To the forgetful man it is a warning that something unpleasant awaits him always round the corner. It is a lesson that men should learn but unfortunately, generally, do not. But those who do are not afraid of afflictions. They come to understand that along with distress there comes from that same source the power to endure, if only they have the faith. There is a prayer of Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas, the heroes of the *Mahabharata,* which bears ample testimony to this fact: 'Let afflictions come to us always, O Lord, so that we may be able to behold you again and again. For beholding you results in effectively cutting off all further births'.[3] Is such a prayer incompatible with healthy living? Is it melancholy of the morbid type?

It is possible to pass off hilarity and affected cheerfulness to be a healthy way of living. But is that a fact? No, hilarity brings in depression in its wake and affected cheerfulness, to borrow an expression from Swami Vivekananda, is putting roses over the festering sores, and calling it beautiful. There is a criterion by which one can judge whether the pessimism of a religious aspirant is that of a sick soul or what is born out of the penetrating wisdom which pierces through the hollowness of all the transient things of the world. The pessimism of such a person does not invade those around with defeatism, nor is he himself overcome by helplessness. Kunti along with her sons had to pass through ordeals and vicissitudes which many a staunch optimist would have shrunk away from, or in facing which would have gone under. But they withstood all and were prepared for the next fling of fortune with calm, but not slavish, resignation. There was dignity in their suffering. Their life does not make us hopeless but infuses strength and faith in ourselves. Under such circumstances can we call the prayer of Kunti a morbid taste for suffering? On the other hand, those who can see, will find in it a direct challenge to destiny: to do what it might and see whether they are found wanting. Such undaunted spirit surely cannot be engendered by brooding over the injuries and insults one has suffered from. That is the spirit which almost comes near the description of a person of 'steady intellect' of the *Gītā.* 'Unmoved in affliction, unattached to pleasures, devoid of attachment, fear and anger, such a sage is said to be of steady wisdom.'[4] So this imputation of morbidity does not hold good in their case, as also in the case of other sages and saints who had to pass through similar circumstances.

Sometimes pain becomes the foreteller of a great event in a person's life; a metamorphosis, as it were, happens in one's outlook on life. It has happened in the case of those who later became great saints. A waylaying robber was shocked into awakening that his very near and dear ones were not ready to share the burden of his sins which he committed in order to maintain them.

[3] विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्तत्र तत्र जगद्गुरो ।
भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यादपुनर्भवदर्शनम् ॥
—*Bhagavata,* I. 8. 25.

[4] दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥
—*Gita,* II. 56.

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There was no physical pain but what mental anguish he must have passed through! And the result was the emergence of a brilliant sage who has made himself immortal by his great epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Another was the commentator on the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavata*, Śrīdharaswami. Thrown into misery by the passing away of his wife, Śrīdhara did not weep or wail but was stunned. The veils of delusion were forcibly torn away from before his mind's eye. The whole play of this worldly phenomena became an open book for him and there and then he renounced. The example of Buddha is a household word to need repetition. He was moved by the suffering in the world, though its burning flames had not personally touched him. Instances can be multiplied but we presume these are sufficient for our purpose.

II

Just at the beginning of this century there was a movement prevalent in some of the Western countries which was called the religion of healthy-mindedness. Prof. William James, the great Psychologist of his time, refers to this movement in one of his Gifford Lectures [5] wherein he cites many instances where cures had been effected in the case of several ailments by this religion of healthy-mindedness, where man naturally refused to be intimidated into thinking of evil or pain. If we carefully and critically go through the instances that he cites we find that it was the trust in God more often than mere optimism that could buoy the practicants up and save them from sinking into the morass of distress. These people had found out that moping and whining and weeping is not the way to face pain, but to create a positive approach: to refuse to be cowed down by misery and put trust in the ultimate good.

Should we then be unfeeling like stock and stone? Sri Ramakrishna gives us the answer. Once a gentleman who had lost his eldest son was brought to Sri Ramakrishna for consolation in his afflicted state of mind. Sri Ramakrishna first sang a song which called for alertness and vigilance against death:

'To arms! To arms, O man! Death storms your house in battle array!
Bearing the quiver of knowledge, mount the chariot of devotion;
Bend the bow of your tongue with the bow-string of love,
And aim at him the shaft of Mother Kali's holy name.
Here is a ruse for the fray: You need no chariot or charioteer:
Fight your foe from the Ganges' bank and he is easily slain.'

Then he said: 'What can you do? Be ready for Death. Death has entered the house. You must fight him with the weapon of God's holy name. God alone is the Doer. I say: "O Lord, I do as Thou doest through me. I speak as Thou speakest through me. I am the machine and Thou art the Operator. I am the house and Thou art the Indweller. I am the engine and Thou art the Engineer." Give your power of attorney to God. One doesn't come to grief through letting a good man assume one's responsibilities. Let His will be done.

'But isn't your grief for your son only natural? The son is one's own self reborn. Lakshmana ran to Ravana when the latter fell dead on the battle-field. Looking at Ravana's body, he found that every one of his bones was full of holes. Thereupon he said to Rama: "O Rama, glory be to Your arrows! There is no spot in Ravana's body that they have not pierced." "Brother," replied Rama, "the holes you see in his bones are not from my arrows. Grief for his sons has pierced them through and through. These holes are the marks of his grief. It has penetrated his very bones."

'But house, wife, and children are all transitory; they have only a momentary existence. The palm-tree alone is real. One or two fruits have dropped off. Why lament?

'God is engaged in three kinds of activity: creation, preservation and destruction. Death is inevitable. All will be destroyed at the time of dissolution. Nothing will remain.'

[5] Collected in book form entitled *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

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What do we gather from this advice of the Master? It does not decry man's feeling for his kith and kin, on the other hand it is unnatural to be unfeeling, but at the same time it stresses that separation from the near and dear ones and anguish on that account cannot be eliminated from this world; that the only way to go beyond pain is to have recourse to God, who is the repose of all. He makes our burden lighter. Did not Jesus declare, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'?[6] This is the message of hope that you hear from all God-men.

III

Summing up we have that pain is an inevitable ingredient in the life of beings. It can be countenanced effectively first of all by discrimination, through the knowledge that pain being transient cannot be everlasting; secondly by turning the bitter experience to profit by making us dive deep into ourselves, or, if you like to call it so, to turn Godward. There is a passage in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* which speaks of the nature of the *jīva* and how it transcends from its lower nature to the higher. 'Two birds of bright plumage, always associated, closely cling to the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit while the other looks on without eating. Seated on the self-same tree, the *jīva* moans bewildered by his impotence to overcome grief and his limitations. But when he sees the other, the Lord, worshipped by all and His glory, he then becomes free from grief.'[7] That is the way to overcome the sting that is in misery.

[6] St. Mathew, XI. 28.

[7] द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्ति अनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति।
समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीत शोकः।
III. i. 1-2.

PANCADAŚĪ — (*Continued from page* 418)

सतो विवेचिते वह्नौ मिथ्यात्वे सति वासिते। आपो दशांशतो न्यूनाः कल्पिता इति चिन्तयेत् ॥९१॥

Sataḥ, from Reality; *vivecité*, in the separated; *vahnau*, fire; *mithyātve sati*, illusoriness being; *vāsite*, firmly taken root (in the mind); *daśāṁśataḥ*, ten times; *nyūnāḥ*, less; *āpaḥ*, water; *kalpitā*, was projected; *iti cintayet*, it should be thought of.

91. When by the method, mentioned above, fire is separated by discrimination from Reality and when its illusory nature firmly takes root in the mind, then it should be known that water (*ap*) is projected in fire and that it manifests only in a tenth part of fire.

सन्त्यापोऽमूः शून्यतत्त्वाः सशब्दस्पर्शसंयुताः। रूपवत्योऽन्यधर्मानुवृत्त्या स्वीयो रसो गुणः ॥९२॥

Anyadharmānuvṛtyā, due to the continuity of the natures of others; *amūḥ*, these; *āpaḥ*, waters; *santi*, are; *śūnyatatvā*, illusory by nature; *saśabdasparśasamyutāḥ*, endowed with sound and touch; *rūpavatyaḥ*, are with form; *svīyaḥ*, its own; *guṇaḥ*, quality (being); *rasaḥ*, taste.

92. Because of the continuity of the natures of others (i.e., Reality, and the elements preceding it) water is said to exist, to be illusory, to be endowed with sound, touch and form, besides having its own nature of taste.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

QUESTION : 'If inside there is one Reality why are there differences outside ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Here lies hidden the solution of all problems. Here all intellects admit defeat. Unless our heart and mind are purified fully this problem of all problems remains unsolved ; to attain this purification one is to work hard, perform spiritual *sādhana*. When this *sādhana* brings in Lord's grace the Reality as it is in itself is revealed. Then understanding comes, but even when that comes it cannot be expressed in language. This is Lord's Māyā. How can you express Him ? He is one, not many, and our language is born of many, duality. How can it express non-duality ? Leave aside Śuddha Brahman, even Kāraṇa-Brahman, the Creator-God, cannot be understood. Suppose you try to explain the Creator-God. You will have to start it at a particular time. So much of creation and therefore of the Creator existing before that time is left out. The Creator is beginningless ; you begin in time, so description is impossible. Again you will have to stop somewhere otherwise people will not understand it ; they might think there still remains much unsaid. Now if you stop, so much of future remains. This side also the description is inadequate. You might say " Knowing one thing we might know all." Is that not based on " uniformity of nature " ? How are you to prove this uniformity when vast domains of nature remain unexplored, and necessarily unexpressed ? So we are forced to say that, how the one has become the many, how the creation and His entry into it have taken place, is simply inexpressible and unthinkable. His grace alone makes it possible. One can intuit it but can neither think it nor express it. Those who have achieved this impossible feat are unanimous in saying, " It is His grace alone ".'

The author : 'Maharaj, if you say He is dwelling in everything then you will have to say He is the cause as well as the effect. So we are to establish a relation between the two — the cause and the effect. Are they one or are they different ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'In creation there are of course both cause and effect. Master used to say, effect is the *vikāra* of the cause. Apart from understanding the true meaning of *vikāra*, let us understand how was the Reality before creation : when the effects were not born where was the difference ? Not in the Lord who is non-dual. And Lord is the one reality, there is nothing else beside or inside. So one will have to say there was no difference. Whence is it now ?'

The author : 'Yes, Maharaj, whence is the difference ? Differences between cause and effect ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'How it came about nobody could tell. There is no reply to why it came. But it is there, an undeniable fact. This irrational improbability is the work of what they call the power of Māyā. It is this Māyā that has brought about the peculiar indescribable difference between the cause and the effect. And this Māyā is the Lord's will. It is this will-power that has converted (if that is the word) the Śuddha-Brahman into the cause of the Universe, made Him the Lord of the world, its controller ; and the effect of the cause, the universe, its dependant. These are to be known as Puruṣa and Prakṛti (not according to the Sânkhyas). How to reconcile this ? What is the difference between Puruṣa and Prakṛti ? It is like this. It is like the distinction between stopping and moving — the thing is the same, now at rest and now in motion. When at rest it is Puruṣa, when in motion Prakṛti. So in reality they are not

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two. When in motion there is no change in the substance of the thing, the change is in and of Māyā. You may ask "Why this change even in Māyā?" This is Māyā, its nature is inexplicable; everything in and of it is vague, indistinct, irrational, inexplicable. This is why philosophy has been forced to call it Māyā. Space and time are its creation. In them are creatures born, live and die. There the interplay of works goes on. As long as one cannot transcend the limits of this Karma one cannot go out of the clutches of Māyā. Even when a *jīva* transcends the limits there still remains some distinction between him and Īśwara. This peculiar distinction our Master used to describe as one between fire and its spark. This distinction (between fire and its spark) is regarding the power (of Māyā); it is not in the substance, not in the Reality that is Brahman. This distinction remains between *jīva* and Īśwara even in that state. *Jīva*, in this state has not risen above Māyā. Master used to say, "Brahman is neither cause nor effect. He is beyond both. You cannot say 'He is' nor can you say 'He is not' — He is in between the two. He is neither one nor two, He is non-dual, in between".'

The author: 'Maharaj, make it a little easy; we could not follow you.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Fellow, enough, enough; you have understood enough. You will not do anything. Without *sādhana* these things are not understandable. You are only tiring a *sādhu's* organ of speech.' Saying this he became silent.

One peculiar trait of Lātu Maharaj, we have observed, was that he would visit anyone's house who came to him without any formality of invitation. Even unnoticed by the devotees he would come and see their houses. Once Kālidāna was ill. One day he came to his house and told him, 'You see, you need not spend on my account any more. Just see, what you have done for me — you have made me use scented linseed oil, made me take milk. I am after all a *Sannyasi*, should I indulge in such luxuries?' (He used the English word pronouncing it as 'lushkari'.)

Kālidāna heard it and said, 'Brother, through the Master's grace I have no wants. He has given me enough and to spare. I spend just a fraction of it on his children. If you deprive me of this little service Master will be angry with me — will he not? Do continue to accept the little service of mine.' Lātu Maharaj yielded. As long as Kālidāna lived he used to send his usual monthly contribution to Lātu Maharaj. It was upto June, 1905.

On 9th May, 1905 Niranjan Maharaj (Swami Niranjanananda) passed away at Hardwar. The news reached Lātu Maharaj the same day at Balarambabu's house. He talked about him the whole day. We give below some of the things he said about Niranjan Maharaj: 'When brother Niranjan came to Master for the first time Master told him, "Look here, my boy, if one does 99 good turns to man and one bad turn, man remembers the one bad turn and forgets the other 99; and if he does 99 bad turns to God and does one good turn, the Lord remembers that one and forgets all the other 99. This is the distinction between God and man. Remember it."

'One day Master touched brother Niranjan and for three days and three nights after that Niranjan did not get a wink of sleep. He had the continuous vision of a mysterious light and went on taking the Lord's name. These three days his tongue could not stop. . . . Before coming to the Master he had joined the spiritualists, who used him as a medium for the descent of ghosts. So the Master told him one day "Now, my boy, another ghost, the Holy Ghost, is on you. However much you may try you cannot throw Him out. He will not leave you. He is not an ordinary ghost." And the Master laughed.'

Biharibabu asked Lātu Maharaj on one occasion, 'Well Maharaj, we read in scriptures that God is the guide of man. Getting Satchidananda as the guide how is it that *jīva* suffers so much. The Guide is eternally pure, sinless, spotless, still man wallows in sins and suffers! How is that?'

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Lātu Maharaj : 'You have answered your own question. The *jīva*, by nature, is eternally pure, how can vice and virtue ever touch him ?'

Biharibabu : 'I can't follow. Do you mean to say that the *jīva* is endowed with a double nature : one vicious and sinful and the other untouched by sin and vice ? Or is there no such thing as virtue or vice ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Look here, Master used to say, "There are virtue and vice, and also they are not. As long as He permits the ego of the *jīva* to remain till then He allows in the *jīva* this sense of difference, of vice and virtue ; and when He permits the blotting out of this ego the sense of difference is also obliterated, and with that of virtue and vice too. As long as the *jīva* thinks he has work to do, he has duties, he is an agent, so long there is virtue as well as vice. But when through His grace this sense of agency goes, go with it also his vice and virtue. Because vice and virtue are the results of his *karma*, not anything different. As one's actions so one's deserts. He, the Lord, has willed it so. This is again for the benefit of the world as well as of the *jīvas*. It is His will that has given the sense of free will to man and its resultant *karma*. It is left to man to work as he wills. If he chooses such activities as have less of joy and more of miseries he is to welcome their results also. So the responsibility devolves on the *jīva*, not on the Lord.'

Biharibabu : 'Scriptures say He is our Guide ; so the responsibility is His, not ours.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Yes, scriptures are right. But tell me who guides the *jīva* bound by Māyā ? Is it not Māyā itself ? Do you know one funny peculiarity of Māyā ? It wants that the play should continue, the hypnotism is sustained. It finds a peculiar joy in rise and fall, in pleasure and pain, in breaking and making ; it likes to dance on the crests of waves, it abhors a calm sea. And the *jīva* who does not want to be bound down to Māyā is guided by the Lord Himself. And the peculiarity of this guidance is just the opposite of those rises and falls — there is but one current of peace and happiness, of bliss unbroken. There no waves ever rise, it is the deep unfathomable, undisturbed even by slightest ripples.'

Biharibabu : 'Yes, Maharaj, I know the scriptures have compared Māyā with the waves and the Lord with the deep ocean. But what difference is there between the two when both are water ? So Māyā's work is also the Lord's : Māyā's guidance is the Lord's guidance. Why not ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Yes from one angle of vision it is so ; but there is another angle too. Master said, "The waves are of the ocean, nobody says the ocean is of the waves." Similarly Māyā belongs to the Lord, Māyā is Lord's, not the Lord Māyā's. So Māyā's guidance cannot be called Lord's guidance. Still know it for certain that the ultimate aim of Māyā's guidance is to take the *jīva* to God.'

Biharibabu : 'But all say, Māyā hypnotizes man and leads him astray.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'She likes to play, she likes its continuance. It is against her wish that the play should stop. In this play man cannot see the end of play. So man comes to the wrong conception that there is no end to this play, she is taking them along a wrong path to a wrong destination. My good fellow, what is wrong, where is the wrong path and false destination ? Is it not all He ? Is not Māyā born out of His will ? How can it go against His purpose, she is there to serve His purpose.'

Biharibabu (in surprise) : 'She is working, Maharaj, to subserve His purpose !'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Yes, otherwise why will she work at all ? There must be a purpose for her as well.'

Biharibabu : 'Scriptures say her work is to make possible all the impossibles. She is a mere illusion, a delusion and a hoax. Her only work is to delude man and keep him in eternal delusion.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Do you know why they say so ? It is because Māyā has made Nirvikalpa savikalpa, Nirviśeṣa saviśeṣa, the attributeless absolute the relative with attributes, that the scriptures have to use harsh words

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against us — harsh but true in a way. They have spoken of Māyā as a delusion, that too is correct. But in which sense? The Nirguna Brahman, the Absolute is the only reality, the eternally immutable. Tell me what else can be true? Things that change, today they are one, of one sort, tomorrow they are another, of another sort — how can you call them true? Compared to this immutable reality, the Nirguna Brahman, Māyā must be called something other than reality. And what name will you give to one that is not reality, will you not call it Māyā, delusion? How can you call a thing that is less than reality even by the least, a reality? It must be an imitation of reality. And imitations are fakes, frauds. But though with relation to the Nirguna Brahman it is delusion it is not so with relation to *jīvas*; it is not only delusion but a reality too palpably real to be ignored. The best term that can be used is *avidyā*, not truly real, neither absolutely false. But the whole truth is not stated even by calling it *avidyā*, for it is not a fact that it keeps *jīvas* permanently under delusion or ignorance. Just on one side it deludes, on another it awakens the *jīvas* to the ultimate Reality. It keeps a fine balance between reality and non-reality, between dark ignorance and dazzling brilliance in which creation melts away. And finally, how unselfishly, she does her work! (One is constrained to describe this wonderful power as a person.) It has kept balance in another way also: between pain and pleasure, between vice and virtue. Why so? It is to teach the great lesson to the *jīva*. Had it been its idea to keep man in eternal bondage it could have kept the worse side of those duals. Because it has kept the opposites, it provides man with his choice; and in that way it deludes and deludes not at the same time. But one thing is true. Hers is not the straight way to the realization of the life's goal. It takes man round and round the truth and at last, all on a sudden, throws him into it and flees. It takes longer time to reach the truth with Māyā's aid. Truth man shall reach, but with much waiting, and through tears as well as smiles. One is cheated many times, many hopes are raised and dashed to the ground. Thus cheated and chafing and groaning, when man understands the nature of Māyā it ceases deluding, it can no more cheat. Then with the aid of her benign power it sets you free. Out of the twilight unreality it creates, wonderful, beautiful treacherous world of enjoyment, goes on duping man and opening his eyes again and again and at last when the eyes are open wide and remain piercing the whole thing vanishes, as if it never existed at all. This is why she is called one "making impossibles possible".'

Biharibabu: 'What, Maharaj, are you talking? Has Māyā a "benign aspect" also?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Oh yes; after all it is His (the Lord's) power; can it be inauspicious?'

Biharibabu: 'As you are interpreting her, she must be called great.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Yes, great she is. And great is God. When properly understood they are one. That day a *sādhu* nicely explained the various types of Vaishnavite salvation. Said he, "People say they are to reach out to God. What reaching out? Is He not already realized? Are they not living in His *loka*? Where is He not? So *sālokya mukti* (living in the same region with the Lord) is already there for them. They have already had the *swārūpya mukti*, for without having His *swarūpa*, essence, how can they exist? (Here a sort of pun has done this trick. Though the explanation and the word actually used here are all right, the Vaishnavas use a different word: their word is *sārūpya*, not *swārūpya*. Their Lord has a peculiar *rūpa* form; and their *sārūpya* means the state of having the same peculiar form of the Lord, and not *swārūpya*, of having the essence of the Lord. However the explanation as it stands, is faultless, correct.) Similarly they are already enjoying the *sāmīpya mukti*, the one of living in His proximity, for what place is there that is away from Him? Only the *sāyujya mukti* they do not enjoy. There lies the difference".'

Biharibabu: 'Let their words go. These are only clever ways of explaining texts. They

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have no practical value. Some say "Jivas are already free"; some, "The world does not exist at all — in past, present and future"; some again, "Brahman himself weeps and cries being encased in the five elements". Let them philosophize. Now tell me, if somebody does not want to wait such a long time for salvation and tries to get salvation in this very present life can your Māyā make any arrangement for that?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Why ask this of me? I know whoever will want Him will get Him, whether he wants Him now, today, in this life, or five or ten lives after. But in one life he will have to stake his all, his very life, then only will he get Him.'

(*To be continued.*)

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THAT one, cosmic, Divine Intelligence rules supreme behind every manifestation of nature is a truth which is brought home to us vividly if we study nature in all its different varieties. What a lesson we can learn by looking at a little plant! When the budding twig stretches its delicate limbs, as it were, to expand itself to reach more light and air, to unfold its inner power, it ought to be enough to convince any thinking person that there is a cosmic power behind even that little manifestation of the sprouting of a small plant. That the seasons follow one another in exact sequence is a patent fact, and it makes us feel that there must be an intelligence which controls the advancement of time with all its ramifications. Some things may seem to happen by chance, but chance never follows any exact sequence. When we find what exact sequence is followed in the workings of cosmic nature we feel convinced that there must be *one* Divine Intelligence which controls every manifestation. It is not only true regarding the evolution of phenomenal nature. If we study the workings of the human mind and the law of advancement that it follows, we will be convinced that in the region of the mind also there is one divine principle, intelligence-Absolute, which is urging the growth and expression of our inner being. Frankly, I do not understand how, knowing nature or knowing the workings of the inner being of man, anyone could still think that there is no Spirit, no intelligent Divine Principle behind every thought, feeling, and act—even behind the falling of every leaf. You may call that by the name of God, Divine Intelligence, or Cosmic Law. It makes no difference. But we must know that it is not unintelligent. It is an intelligent Principle.

Lately, I have been interested in studying the history of the development of modern scientific investigation. In the first place, it seems to me that unknown to us, a Divine Intelligence has already planned the procedure this investigation would follow. It is something like the blooming of a flower. The flower does not realize that a Cosmic Intelligence is guiding and assisting its progress towards full bloom. Likewise, we human beings, individually and collectively, do not realize that there is a Divine Intelligence which furnishes the urge behind all our actions. If you analyze the course of your own development you will find that it follows a definite line; it does not happen fatuously. You will find that your life progresses with a certain method. Briefly, what impressed me in my study of modern scientific progress is this: That man is progressing from the knowledge of the gross to the knowledge of the subtle. As an illustration we might say that it is something like a child who at first learns to sense visible, tangible and colourful objects

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(phenomena that are brilliant and that appeal to and shock the windows of the senses) and then it gradually unfolds the capacity to accept finer and more subtle objects. And, as the child progresses and has the opportunity to develop further, it transcends the mere fact of accepting objects. It goes into the realm of feelings and thoughts, and gradually it goes deeper and deeper into the most subtle phase of its being. It seems to me that humanity, in much the same way, is progressing from the understanding of the gross to the realization of the subtle.

I should like to give you a brief outline, as I see it, of the development of the outlook of modern science towards the human being. You who are especially interested in science may find the references very brief but I hope they will suffice to bring out the points relevant to my subject. I think we may say that modern scientific investigation began with the discovery of gun-powder. This was needed by man for his defence, and its twin aggression. I think there is a meaning behind it. It did not happen as a matter of chance. Then came the discovery of a power behind, such as steam, electricity, and so on. These came as the result of the need felt by man for communications, transport, and the consolidation and expansion of the power which he had thus far achieved. Having these forces at his command man became more and more restless and aggressive. There arose in him a strong feeling of competition and the desire to subdue his fellow men, which resulted in conquests. Thus, further scientific investigations grew with the need for more advantageous weapons. Man applied his power mainly towards destructive, rather than constructive, ends.

Let us stop a moment to analyze the bent of the human mind, of which we get a glimpse in our study of the development of science. Man fundamentally starts his life almost like a low animal. His urge is one of survival. He wants to live. Even if he has to push others aside, he wants to live. As he advances into the arena of life he discovers other and deeper urges. His outlook regarding his own self, his country, and the people of other countries and races gradually unfolds. So science began with the study of the gross aspect of nature, with experiments on the development of outer nature, as man himself felt the need of acquiring mastery over these forces to suit his own ends.

The transition period of modern science from the observation and study of gross nature to the study of subtler forces began, to my mind, with the inauguration of the science of biology; and Darwin's theory established a turning point. His interest was in the study of life itself. He was mystified by the manifestations of life. The flower blooms, the animals come into existence. What is behind the mystery of it all? Is there any law? The existence of a subtle power behind life occupied his interest, and he started to study life itself. Of course, with his understanding and the resources under his control he reached certain conclusions, with which I do not fully agree. But he established a very important point: That there is *one* urge behind every manifestation. That is very important. I call Darwin the first Monist of the West because he established that *one* fundamental principle is working behind every manifestation of life. No Western science or philosophy before him had done so.

Before Darwin, what was known as science, or natural philosophy, dealt with the manifestations of nature but did not reach the conclusion that there was *one* fundamental force regulating all beings. It was Darwin who established this theory. We should give him the highest credit for having been a pioneer in a study which diverted scientific investigation into a far deeper realm than gun-powder, steam, electricity, and the rest. These are beneficial for man, but they occupy only one stratum of human evolution or development. The next phase began when Darwin made the life-force, or the vital force behind every manifestation of life, the subject-matter of his study. And his theories are correct within certain limits.

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Darwin discovered that the urge to live, the clinging to life, is the basic principle behind every living being. It guides life equally from the highest to the lowest. We Vedantists would call this principle, God. We would say that God is present behind every manifestation, in the form of the urge to live. However, we differ from Darwin in that we call that principle an intelligent force. We would say that an intelligent force exists behind every manifestation, in the form of the urge to live. When a living being responds to the stimuli it does so intelligently, not mechanically. That intelligence may be involved or evolved, but it is intelligence. What we Vedantists call cosmic, Divine Intelligence was understood by Darwin as simply the universal urge to live.

A living being, as it stands in the midst of cosmic nature, experiences contending forces that threaten its very life. A kind of contest, a battle against outer forces, commences. So it struggles, and that struggle unfolds many faculties from within it. Darwin found out that as a living being follows this urge, this struggle for existence, higher and higher manifestations were brought about, and he called that process the "survival of the fittest". A species struggles and gains as its assets certain faculties; it undergoes certain modifications and it propagates, thus advancing that particular species. That is the law of evolution. And in order to continue what the species has attained, an urge is felt for natural selection in the propagation of that species. That is of course one of the most important theories of Darwin. So Darwin established that the urge to live is expressed in two ways: As the desire for survival, and when that entity finds that it cannot survive indefinitely it aspires for survival in the species. That is how creation is going on. However, a good deal of investigation has been carried out since the time of Darwin and man has been able to know much more about life, its origin, its progress, its unfoldment, and so on, than Darwin could ever dream of. But we should pay our tribute to him for first pointing the way towards a more comprehensive understanding of life.

Then we find that another transition came with the inauguration of the study of modern psychology. I have a great deal of respect for modern psychology, as for any other department of scientific study, but like anything else you have to accept it with your own understanding. If you swallow every new theory without giving due consideration you will be unscientific. Even in our approach to the study of science we must exercise our power of understanding. There have been volumes upon volumes written on the various aspects of modern psychology. Of course, I do not agree with all of these, nor do I intend to go into the details here. I shall mention only a few outstanding contributions in this field.

The universal urge for life which was called the struggle for existence by Darwin was studied from different angles by subsequent scientists. The psychologists made the human mind the subject of their study. They were not satisfied with Darwin's theory. They objected that by studying animal instinct a final and correct conclusion could not be reached. They contended that the urge to fight for life was not a very high urge to explain human life. Man must be guided by a more subtle urge. A man wants to live, but not just for the sake of living. Why do we want to live? There must be another, a higher and more subtle urge that prompts the manifestation and unfoldment, the evolution of life's attempt. So psychologists took up the study of the mind.

Psychology has gone through different stages of development. I am sure most of you are acquainted with the works of Freud. He is a great figure and his name will long remain in the memory of posterity. His contribution towards human knowledge has been immense, although his theories are not absolutely correct. He called that fundamental urge of life the 'libido', directly connected with the urge which Darwin had described as the urge for the propagation of the species. But Freud went further. He went into the field of the consciousness of man, into the study of the complexities in the mind of man, and he asso-

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ciated that fundamental urge of life a good deal with sex. I would like you not to form a hasty opinion when this word is used; it is a scientific expression. It would be wrong to associate anything low or disparaging with the name of Freud and his theory of the libido. But it cannot explain all the different urges felt in human or other forms of life.

After Freud came a co-worker, an associate and disciple of his. Adler called that same urge the 'will to power'. Adler maintained that the urge behind life is nothing but the will to gain more and more power. We Vedantists would call it the Divine Principle which is behind every consciousness in the form of the urge to unfold power, which is its birthright. We would say that God is present everywhere and that life's urge is nothing but the will to gain more and more power (God, in our conception). Adler's theory is that every entity struggles to gain more power and that all of our urges, the motive-force behind our emotions, our love, our hate, all, are guided by that will to power. It is a little difficult perhaps to understand that it is the urge or will to power that makes a mother love her child, that a mother wants to express herself in the form of power in her offspring. At first thought, perhaps, you will not agree to accept such a theory, but Adler maintains that the motive-force of the will to power is behind every feeling and emotion. I agree with Adler in some respects. I appreciate him but something within me rebels. For one thing, I do not like his expression, power. It almost has the sense of subduing, subjugating whatever stands in its way.

Could this 'power' of Adler's be interpreted in more subtle terms? Yes, I agree it is power we are all working for, but what is our conception of power? Again let me point out that from the beginning of history man has been advancing gradually in his understanding of power. Power is an important word today. At this stage of evolution we like this word, power. But what do we mean by power? In Darwin's theory the urge was the same as in Adler's conception of the will to power. The urge was one of power but in lower animals it was understood as the urge to survive and to propagate the species. Even lower animals show off power. Even in natural selection there is a display of power. At a certain stage of the development of man, power was understood as the subjugating force by which rivals were overthrown. That is power no doubt, but giving up power is also power. It is a subtle manifestation of power. We call it the manifestation of spiritual power. As the species advanced that one power behind life was understood in different ways. However, I do not know whether any future psychologists will establish anything else in place of Adler's 'will to power'. It explains many things.

One groping in the darkness without giving any name to that urge, and accused by his fellow-scientists of dabbling in mysticism, is Jung, an associate of Adler and Freud. Jung considers that the urge of life is not only the urge for power, but he does not give a name to it. In his book, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, he wants to say that it is the urge of the soul which forms the motive-force of life. That is, the Divine Principle, God of the Vedantists. We say that God exists in the form of the soul. Man, the soul, evolves and manifests itself more and more as it progresses in life. The will to power, the libido, the survival of the fittest — all these can be understood if we admit the existence of *something* which is trying to express itself through all these urges.

Long, long ago, in the Upaniṣads that *something* was described in a different language. I do not compare the study of the Upaniṣads with the study of modern biology, psychology and so on; the Upaniṣads dealt with a much deeper phase of our being. Nevertheless, one is impressed by finding a similarity between them. In the Upaniṣads that urge is called the urge for knowledge. Knowledge forms the urge and the urge is God. Knowledge cannot stand any impediment. Wherever there is any impediment to our knowledge there is a strong protest, and that protest has expressed itself in the form

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of life. Man fundamentally feels that he *is* knowledge. Analyze your own mind and you will find that you protest whenever your right to know is denied. Whenever you find something standing between you and your object of knowledge, you raise a voice of protest in the form of action. And that has proceeded in the form of life. I can understand even what is known as the urge to live, the survival of the fittest, propagation of the species, will to power, all of it, in the light of the theory of the Upaniṣads, which call it the urge for knowledge, the urge to know.

You may ask, if life is the urge for knowledge why should we want to perpetuate ourselves? We want to perpetuate ourselves because we are not satisfied with what we have attained. We want something more. Our ideal has not been achieved. We do not want to be cut short by death; we want to conquer death. We want to know the truth of what is beyond death. We want to know who inhabits the planets, what the moon and other celestial bodies are like, and so on, without our only asset, life, being snatched away from us. So we feel a protest against death, the cessation of our existence. That protest against death, against the extinction of our life and the curtailment of our knowledge, is within us, and it urges us to want to survive in the species when we find we cannot individually live forever.

Suppose you have known everything there is to be known; you become all-knowing. Do you think you would cling to life as you now do? What would there be to achieve by this machinery then? No, you would want to transcend this limitation of life, because life, apart from the advantages it presents, has a great disadvantage — it limits you. So, knowing the truth you would go beyond the urge to live and to multiply the species. The urge to multiply is only felt as a secondary urge to live. According to what we have been discussing today, when you realize that you cannot live forever you want to perpetuate yourself in the species, in the group life. If you have attained what there is to attain, there would be no urge to want to continue life, so-called.

Power is only one of the various results of the more fundamental and basic law of knowledge. What you call power is nothing but a small manifestation of knowledge. Consider such illustrations of power as electricity, steam, hydraulics, and so on. Is it very difficult to come to the conclusion that these are all the result of a certain mode of knowledge, expressed by certain minds? These are nothing but the amount of knowledge certain minds have been able to unfold through a particular mode of expression. The power of a singer or an artist is nothing but a fraction of that Knowledge which he has been able to absorb, assimilate and manifest, which he has been able to unfold from within.

The old saying, 'Knowledge is Power', ought to be understood from the viewpoint of metaphysics. We all love power. We are working to gain more power. But we should, at this stage, understand that it is not the power of firearms or of muscles that is meant by power. That stage has been outlived by man. We should not linger in the animal state any longer, thinking that the acquisition of physical prowess and deadly weapons is to be worshipped as power. The power of knowledge should be understood, scientifically, as the power of God. You need not banish reason and research and accept a few truths by means of faith. I do not advocate such a procedure.

Let us advance scientifically and understand power as knowledge, as correct knowledge regarding everything. Now, correct knowledge regarding everything we see about us, which is called the 'non-Self', is attained by gaining the knowledge of the Self. That is a very important statement. It has been established in the Upaniṣads that if you want to know the whole world, if you want to gain freedom, which is the highest power that can be achieved, you must know your own Self. You must attain correct knowledge regarding your inner being. And when you know that, you know God. What modern scientists call by the name

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of fundamental urge to live, the libido, the will to power, and this and that, is nothing but the manifestation of that universal, Divine Intelligence, which we Vedantists call God. When you know your Self correctly, your knowledge of the Self will be the knowledge of God. You will know God by knowing your Self, and knowing God you will inherit the power of God.

Let me close by presenting to you this great aphorism which I have used as the title of this talk; this aphorism, which you can repeat at every step of your life, which you can use almost as a *mantram* (a mystic word or phrase which, being repeated and understood, solves all your problems and brings you to perfection). Repeat it, meditate upon it, and see what you can derive from a clear comprehension of this great *mantram*: 'Knowledge is Power'.

PHILOSOPHY OF ROBERT BROWNING

SWAMI TATHAGATANANDA

'THAT lost traveller who yearns for home, who strayed without a guide in a dark forest, takes many times the wrong road, goes, returns upon his steps, is discouraged, sits down at a crossing of the roads, utters cries to which no one responds, resumes his march with frenzy and pain, throws himself upon the ground and wants to die, and reaches home at last only after all sorts of anxieties and after sweating blood.' The underlying idea behind these lines, spoken of Pascal in another context, is shared by Browning also. He had strong faith in his vision for 'the ideal dawn'.

> 'Haply for us the ideal dawn shall break . . .
> And set our pulse in tune with moods divine,'—

The poet believes in nothing short of the return journey, for one and all, toward 'an illustrious origin'. In the age of disbelief and despair his profound faith in the destiny of man 'attests a moral nature of a high rank and a mental nature stamped with the seal of the archangel'.

Browning is a poet of the Romantic Age which is characterized by individualism and freedom and not of submission to authority. The influence of the age — its 'sick hurry' and 'divided aims' — its feverish ardour and one-sided views — is reflected in the works of the celebrities of the period. The melancholy tone of the age (Age of Romanticism) is reflected in writings of Carlyle, 'Sorrow is the life of poets, it is the key to their thought — it is another name for seriousness'. To Ruskin the age is characterized by ennui, jaded intellect and want of faith leading to chaos, confusion and unrest and distraction. 'Indeed it was the age of Werther, of Rene, of Faust, of Paracelsus, of Obermann.' Even the 'sincerest laughter of Shelley is fraught with some pain'. Wordsworth had learnt to hear often times the 'still sad music of humanity'. Against this echo of the sick age, the poet is looked upon as a beacon-light assuring the voyagers on the sea of life. His faith in God and his ordination — on the unfolding fruition of His Love conveying the practical message of hope and love — is calculated to regenerate the world of the future, vibrating with new life-pulse and new sympathies. Indeed he is one of the constellation of brilliant stars that illumined the poetic sky of the period.

To evaluate his philosophy we must have a grasp over the spirit of the age. The French Revolution was transformed into a movement of bitter despair. It finally manifested itself into a succession of reactionary convulsions that threatened to uproot the fabric of society. It was the age of bread-riots, Chartist agitation, *coup-de-etat*, Fenian out-breaks, 'Oxford Movement' which rudely shocked the cherished beliefs of the people. Scepticism,

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agnosticism, nihilism and socialism were in the air. This is epitomised in the lines of Cowper :

'. . . . . an impious world
Who deem religion frenzy, and the God
That made them, an intruder on the joys.'

'To have felt the growing difficulties of faith, and the increasing intellectual anarchy in the year between 1832 and 1851, one must have been born some years later than Tennyson, and to have known Oxford in those days. . . .' In the words of Mr. Froude the youths of the time were like the whirling leaves in autumn storm.

Browning was born in 1812. Standing on the terra-firma of unshakable faith in God, he never swayed away like his great compeers by the strong current of intellectual aberration. His parentage, his early education, mode of living were all favourable to the magnificent growth of an original crop of poetry, free from formalism and traditionalism. Rather he popularized Absolute God of the Vedas in his works. He was a genius. He had too much originality, and far too large a share of that 'vision and faculty divine'. He never took 'art as a mere amusement, as a mere escape from the graver problems of life'. He did not belong to the class of poets who are dubbed as 'idle singer of an empty day'. Although he was a poet of the Romantic Age, the contemporary events are not reflected in his poems. He was more concerned in the superhuman task of salvaging the ship-wrecked people condemned to intellectual morbidity of the soul. He made a splendid spade-work to clear the debris, as if, being called forth by the peculiar exigencies of an age. He focussed the life-saving ideas of God and Love. These two concepts are looked upon as lifebelts to the ship-wrecked passengers on an unchartered ocean.

'Europe in the years 1847 and 1848', says Dowden in his life of Robert Browning, 'was like a sea broken by wave after wave of Revolutionary passion.' 'The sad lucidity of soul' was an echo of the age of morbid intellectualism caused by the doctrines of Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Schelling and also by the materialistic science in the hands of Darwin, Huxley, Lamark and others. The iconoclastic tendency of the period also shook the foundation of traditional art and poetry. 'The poetry of Mathew Arnold reflects, along certain lines even more faithfully than the poetry of either (i.e. Tennyson and Browning) some peculiar significance of 19th century thought.' (*Cambridge History of English Literature*).

Shelley, Keats and Coleridge turned idealists. Shelley yearned for pure joy and beauty that was remote and un-earthly, 'beating in the void his luminous wings in vain'. Keats found delight in pursuing ideal beauty. Wordsworth eschewed the path of 'poetic diction' and arrested our eyes to the common things around us. Browning, in fact, was the only towering personality who remained unperturbed like a rock. His robust faith in God, Love and Truth, his optimism and his sense of equality remained undisturbed by the iconoclastic movement of the age. He, like a chivalrous knight of the medieval period, faced the challenge of the hostile thought currents and came out victorious with laurels of faith in one hand and of Love in the other.

Politically it was an age of democracy, for philosophers it was the age of humanity, 'respect a person and be a person' being the ethical maxim of Hegel and service to humanity being the religion of Compte.

Browning had a mission to fulfil. He along with the well-meaning men of genius like Goethe, Carlyle, Ruskin, Mathew Arnold, Clough, Tennyson wanted to liberalize and enrich ideas to re-construct art, to uplift people by opening their eyes to higher possibilities. Browning wanted to save people of his age by supplementing the defects of science and counteracting the intellectual narrowness of philosophy through poetry.

We like to mention, briefly, some of the fundamental tenets of his thoughts.

'Faith in God'

'Sun-treader, I believe in God, and truth and love' (Pauline). Browning's creed has

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been put in a nut-shell here. It is really surprising, for it required a good deal of moral courage to make this plain and bold confession in that age of scepticism and unbelief. The greatest intellectuals were being carried helplessly by the strong current of agnosticism. It affected even Tennyson and Arnold. Tennyson could not attain an optimism clear of all doubts. Arnold could not claim full faith ; but defined God as 'a stream of tendency, not ourselves, making for righteousness'. Browning alone remained unmoved like a rock. 'In fact, faith is the starting point of his philosophy, as of his poetry, as *cogito argo sum* is the starting point of Descartes' philosophy.' He applied his talent to infuse faith and life into the materialistic and sceptic age. He never totally deprecated the worth of 'cosmogony, Geology, Ethnology' but at the same time he had no intention to keep people in the darkness of ignorance. He saw with dismay the pernicious effects of the pseudo-believers who relapse into a state of barbarism. He would not have men,

> 'Believe — and yet lie, kill, rob, fornicate.
> Full in belief's face, like the beast
> you'd be.'

He simply wanted to infuse more love, more feelings, more wisdom for the complete fruition of the intellectual advancement. He did not consider that full faith was incompatible with full knowledge in any way. But he would 'prefer faith and love ignorance, to loveless and faithless learning'. He would not give any reason for his belief. He repudiated the pretensions of pure intellect to understand such transcendental things. 'Like a man in wrath' he would lodge protest against all unbeliefs. So in 'Easter Day' he says :

> 'God is, thou art, — the rest is hurled
> To nothingness for thee.'

The poet has recorded how he got the glimpse of God in 'Paracelsus' through intuition —

> 'The secret of the world was mine
> I knew, I felt, (perception unexpressed),
> Uncomprehended, by our narrow
> thought.'

He had faith in personal God and in Christ. He referred to his conception of Absolute God 'as the Supreme Intelligence which apprehends all things in their Absolute Truth'.

The spirit of God fills every bit of the Universe — flowers, trees, animals. He sang the Joy of Immortal life.

Browning had faith in the personal God. He was devoted to Christ. He also could 'entertain the idea of absolute God without any sense of incongruity'. The subtle and complex ramifications of life are being interpenetrated by this absolute idea which transcends passions and senses. His faith in God gave him the insight to feel the presence of God in everything — in good and bad, in great and small and in success and failure. This idea enabled him to grasp the conception of the Universal in the body of the particular. In all the cases we find the discovery of Absolute God in some transcendental moment through intense emotion of love. He viewed the universe standing upon the bedrock of Absolute God. He had tremendous love for God which culminated in his love for man — low and high. The solid world melted and dissolved before ardent love.

But mechanical and soulless ceremonies and rituals stifled his springs of devotion. They had no appeal to him. His catholicity and broadmindedness are reflected in his poems :

> 'Oh, let men keep their ways
> Of seeking Thee in a narrow shrine —
> Be this my way ! And this is mine.'
> (Christmas Eve, V)
>
> '. . . For me,
> I have my own church equally :
> And in this Church my faith sprang
> first !'
> (Ibid.)
>
> 'Why, where's the need of Temple,
> when the walls
> O' the world are that ? . . .
> (Epilogue to Dramatis Personae, XI)

The ordinary man with his limited vision does not get the true view of things around us. In

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the eye of God all are alike. It is required that the weakness of ordinary man is to be conquered. Then he shall not be confronted with the idea of joy and sorrow, good and evil.

'Small, Great, are merely terms we bandy here;
Since to the spirit's absoluteness all
Are alike.'
(Sordello, VI)
(p. 613, *The Poems of R. Browning*)

These sentiments are also echoed by Shelley. in his 'Queen Mab'.

'Every grain
Is sentient both in unity and part,
And the minutest atom comprehends
A world of loves and hatreds; these beget
Evil and good.'
(IV. 146)

Browning's broad and harmonious view of life taught him to see God in everything. Pauline says:

'I felt as one beloved, and so shut in
From Fear: and thence I date my trust in signs
And omens, for I saw God everywhere.'

It may be thought that Browning withdrew himself from the dust and din of this hard realistic world into the pure atmosphere of unworldly beauty. Like Wordsworth's Skylark, he gave full recognition to the limitations of the finite. But the dull, drab, prosaic world of materialism did not attract him. He saw finite soaked with the Infinite. Rainbow hues spread over it. He had tremendous love for man. He loved God with personal love, the same kind of love that subsists between two lovers. He focussed the peculiar needs and symptoms of the times with earnestness and sympathy. His message was — 'all love yet all's law'. And the watchword of the poet was not more knowledge but more love.

In the words of Santayana, 'he is something far more convincing, far more comforting, far more religiously significant than an optimist'. Milton in his days had justified the ways of God to man in the traditional way. Browning, in the romantic age, took upon himself to justify the ways of God, struggling under the impact of the modern notions of Science and metaphysics.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA— THE PROPHET PRODIGY

S. C. DAS GUPTA

A TOTAL misfit to the age in which he was born, and forsooth an anachronism to *beau monde* and parlour decorum by any standard, this Man though physically dead eight decades ago, lives today in spirit and can count his 'fans' by the million in many countries round the world; and this legion is multiplying and increasing. Born in the mid thirties of the last century, of a poor Brahmin family coming from a remote village, which nestles in a sylvan setting and nature's beatitude, 150 kilometers from Calcutta, Gadadhar, the early name of Sri Ramakrishna, stoutly refused to have secular and bread-winning education; remonstrance from the elder brother fell on deaf ears. From the age of a mere kid, he would sit and meditate, cantillate and sing hymns, and listen to scriptures and *paurānic* stories; and much to his delight he would keep company with *sādhus* and wandering minstrels. The morning showed the day of the coming Man; often he lost body-consciousness and would go into trances with effortless ease like water dripping off the swan's back. A short piece of cloth round his waist which at the other end sported about his knees, was all that adorned his body but in a moment of detachment even this last shred of civilization would find itself

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rolled up like a ball in his arm-pits; and as he grew old this habit persisted much to the consternation of people around him, to behold the Nature's child.

Once against the back-drop of an azure sky, there appeared a mound of thunder-cloud, viciously black with silver-lining. Then a flock of white cranes cut across the cloud. The fascinating contrast was good enough to make child Gadadhar lose all physical consciousness. . . . Another time, as a last moment substitute of the original member who suddenly fell ill, Gadai was hurriedly dressed and pushed to the stage, to play the hero's role. False matted hair and wigs, tiger-skin on the loins, trident in hand, paper snakes round the neck and body rubbed with ash completed the decor of the Shiva-image. This image quickened into life, as it were, and lo! the boy went into ecstasy; he stood motionless. That was the abrupt end of a dramatic beginning. The little Thespians who had mustered strong to have their histrionic talent off the chest, missed the bus but gained a life-time vision!

Spoken words have their limitation. Many a time they cannot express inner experience, or explain the gamut of subtle and emotive feelings and nuances. Professor William J. Hastie came to the tether-end of his wits and, admitting his failure, asked his pupils to go to Dakshineswar and have a look at the Brahmin who frequently went into ecstatic moods. The Professor was giving a lesson on Wordsworth's poem on Ecstasy. . . . By that time much water had flowed under the bridge, Gadadhar had become adolescent and the elder brother, a man of strong common sense, had led his junior from the native environ to Dakshineswar where useful occupation, so the elder brother, Ramkumar thought, would tame the arcadian, make him sensible and knock off his brain-fever and hallucinations; otherwise the path lay for Gadadhar to go to seeds or become a waster.

About 7 kilometres north of Calcutta, at Dakshineswar, Rani Rasmani had built a Kali temple with a dozen smaller ones of Lord Shiva, flanking alongside the eastern bank of the Ganges. First, Gadai apprenticed as a 'dresser' of the temple images; later was promoted to become one of the regular priests. But alas! Ramkumar's calculation went awry. . . . Uninhibited, Gadadhar raved more and more for the divine vision, wept, sang and danced day and night. Horror of horrors, he would shower on his head flowers and other material of worship, or eat up the food and offerings before their consecration to the deity.

The next manœuvre was to get him married. He was called back home. A drag-net was cast; and bride-hunt began. Except once when he stood firm and drew a line against learning the three R's, Gadai was good-natured, demure and docile, obedient and obliging to parents and elders: indeed he was loved and loving, with plenty of Irish charm and humour all through his life. He quietly put a lid on the hurly-burly and married a girl of his own choice, 18 years younger, from an adjacent village. This panacea too failed.

After the marriage furlough (!) Gadadhar repaired to Dakshineswar to resume his duty at the temple. Time rolled on. Rumours spread on the wings of ether; and in the case of Gadadhar that he had gone off the head, the rumours gathered into a cyclone and hit his ancestral home and in-law's place. The immediate reaction was to put him under a psychiatrist-*cum-āyurvedic* practitioner; but the good wife, who was now eighteen, rushed to the spot, at the hour of crisis, to make assessment from close quarters, about her consort — albeit, she had taken the rumours with a pinch of salt, and was calm and resigned. The first contact reassured her, the heady wine was his intense love for God and ecstasy of God-realization. He offered her the choice and option to exercise the marital rights, but out of her own volition she abjured them and all sense-pleasures which the human body was prone to claim. She remained with her husband to keep his body and soul together, cooking food, nursing and serving him. In turn the husband taught the wife with meticulous care, duties of a wife and house-holder,

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and above all, initiated her into the religious and spiritual practices. The process of divination culminated on that memorable new-moon night when Sri Ramakrishna worshipped his spouse as the Divine and Universal Mother. Both were lost in ecstasy, in *samādhi* and became one with the Supreme Being, transcending the bounds of sex, norms and forms, time and space. Like heat to the fire, wave to the sea, Brahman and His Shakti, Ramakrishna became inseparably one from Saradamani Devi, the Holy Mother. Soul enveloped soul, revelling and regaling. . . . Tryst was made with Destiny; and later on the appointed hour came for her to redeem the pledge of Ramakrishna to take care of the children who would come, after his passing away, in numbers more than she could manage. The first assignment began with the band of young men who were the direct disciples of the Master.

To return to the story; the divination complete — then, began the trek to Dakshineshwar, one after another, of experts in their respective fields of specialization in spiritual attainment and realization. Dakshineswar became the veritable hub of pilgrims; instead of the disciple going after the *guru* in time-worn-tradition, the *gurus* came to Ramakrishna, like needles drawn by the magnet. Three days and three nights were enough for Ramakrishna to go through the maze and intricacies of yogic practices and sacerdotal ordination for the highest and intense-most mystic experience and illumination which the *gurus* must have attained for the price of lifetime austerities, rigorous discipline, meditation, concentration and consecration. Sri Ramakrishna emerged from the different mystic experiences of monism, dualism, Christianity, Islam and what not, to proclaim: As many faiths, so many paths. Behind all diversity and mutation, ephemeral and transient nature of things, and changing patterns of life and living, exists alone the Ultimate Reality which is immutable, imperishable and eternal. The proclamation itself was not new; the Vedas had made that thousands of years ago but the cumulative mysticism stemming from *sādhana* and *samādhi* of this man was new. Ramakrishna strode as a Colossus, as it were, outflanking his predecessor prophets. Indeed he was a prophet-prodigy, and will remain a prophet *par excellence* of the future. Tolerance and benignity, catholicity and compassion were his forte and genre. He did not come to teach any new religion; he came to synthesize and integrate all religions and different systems of philosophy. . . . He himself avers that he was a combination of the spiritual powers of Ramchandra and Krishna. They were both kings; they married and begot children whereas Sri Ramakrishna came of a poor Brahmin family; he too married, but remained celibate like the penultimate prophet Chaitanya. Chaitanya and Ramakrishna came last in the line of galaxies and both were born in the sacred soil of Bengal. Buddha was a prince and blessed with a son. The two prophets who did not marry and who died young were Jesus and Shankaracharya.

Ramakrishna's faith in diverse paths was born of direct perception at a mature age but what about his taking food from the hands of a *Śudra* woman after the sacred thread ceremony, when quite a child? This woman had nursed him and in gratitude Gadadhar made her the promise. He stuck to his gun, disavowing the *shastric* injunction, much to the dismay of his relatives. Was it a sign of the boy's probity or was it symptomatic of his faith in the divine nature of man which transcended the barriers of customs and manners, and of caste, colour and creed? Why did he discard the sacred thread after the initiation into monism by Totapuri and yet retain the householder's cloth? Could he have not donned the ochre-coloured cloth, the status-symbol of a sannyasin? . . . The simple question to Rani Rasmani was devastating: Would you order out another husband for your daughter, if the son-in-law broke his leg? The learned Pundits and theologians who had gathered to give a decision on the admissibility of worshipping an idol with a broken limb, were dumb-struck at this incontrovertible

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logic. They hurriedly left the temple with the mighty tomes pack-a-back. Not once but many a time the genius of Ramakrishna pierced like a lightning the clouds of doubts and despair, and hit upon an unconventional solution to a complex problem which, in simplicity and majesty, was just unbeatable. He had also the uncanny flair of using *mote juste* in his discourses and parables. Jesus, too, at a tender age, joined the temple priests who were discussing an abstruse metaphysical problem, without coming to grips with a straight answer, and supplied them the key. Any way, like a deft surgeon, Ramakrishna grafted the broken limb to the idol without a scar!

Then, later on, there was the instance of righteous indignation of a disciple who felt aggrieved at the neglect of the host and suggested withdrawal from the dinner party, which lingered long into the night. Pat came the repartee: how would you feed the empty stomach at dead of night and who would pay the precious two rupees for the return carriage? Mum, was the word for the answer! Of mimes and mimics, Ramakrishna was a past-master. While a teenager, and not grown the patriarchal beard and moustache, he could dress like a girl and pass off in the midst of women without calling off the bluff. Womanly gestures, postures and guiles were at his finger tips; he could render them with superb grace and realism. This apart, Ramakrishna had free access to the 'inner court' of a householder any time day and night. This is saying a lot in the context of a purdah-ridden age in which he was born. He was not only completely void of sex ideas but also would he see in every woman the image and manifestation of the Divine Mother. No wonder, at the sight of a woman *declassé* he exclaimed: 'Here, too, art Thou manifest, O Mother' and went into *samādhi*. He had no attachment for gold or any earthly possession. Even in sleep, if money was thrust in his hand, the fingers would recoil in repulsion!

Sri Ramakrishna was allergic to newspapers and he used to make fun of them. English newspapers had then come to stay in our country and the young generation avidly read them through the pages, often swearing by the reports which appeared in them. One day his disciples were having a heated discussion on some matter when suddenly Narendra, the group leader, snapped out 'I don't believe in what you say'. At this Sri Ramakrishna batted his eyelid and said with a serene smile: Perhaps the matter has not appeared in newsprint! Narendra cooled off at this superb wit of the Master. . . . The Master had also the characteristic of forthright frankness while administering spiritual needs to an aspirant of truth or admonishing an errant visitor whoever he might have been. Ramakrishna made no distinction between high-jinks and low-jinks; once he snubbed a well-known administrator-cum-writer of a high order for the latter's frivolity and profanity. His saying 'People who eat radish belch radish' has now passed into a famous dictum.

His love for devotional music was well-known; his silvery voice added to the lyricism of *bhajans*, unfolded the inner meaning which was often lost for lack of semantics of the language. His music and aesthetic sense and spirituality stemmed from the sublimated purity of the body and the soul. In spiritual heritage efforts need not be wasted through additive externals but re-dedication should be inspired to streamline the functional forms and discipline. Ramakrishna illustrated in his own life the need of intuition on the part of an aspirant after truth, to establish harmony between spiritual architecture and its *milieu*. On the physical plane he was near-handsome but definitely charming and attractive with well-proportioned figure and half-closed eyes, indrawn mood and bare body, except for the piece of loin-cloth, lovely in its skin of petal-soft sheen that gave soft halations to the profile and the unkempt beard and moustache.

It is a tough job to be a prophet. Instead of Papini's 'stinking stable' where Jesus was born, Ramakrishna was born in an humble atmosphere of an unsophisticated paddy-husking shed. The newly born Jesus rolled into a near-by manger; Ramakrishna into the pit

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where the pestle heaved in rhythms to remove the husk. Instead of crucifixion, Ramakrishna had a lesser gruelling experience; he had carcinoma of the throat, earlier labelled as 'clergy man's throat'. Jesus gave his life in dripping blood with the last famous words on the quivering lip : Father, forgive them. . . . Ramakrishna rejected doctor's advice; he talked and took the punishment, in order to bring solace and peace to the tortured souls of sinners, no less of saints and seekers of truth. With the last gasp of life, both breathed words of blessing and benediction to the eternal man.

The advent of Ramakrishna was marked with Divine Grace : A light of ray darted from the temple image and entered the body of Chandramani, even as she was saying her prayers in the porch. Right at that moment the husband was away at Gaya, worshipping in a temple. The presiding deity told him in a vision that he was coming into the family. A check was made with the good wife by Khudiram on his return home; and both reposed the secret between them in utmost confidence. The nature had donned a tapestry of celestial gaiety and bliss. The advent of Christ too was heralded by a host of angels, under the blue canvas of the sky.

It is said that three things make the grade of a Prophet. First of all, God incarnates Himself in the form of a human being to meet the challenge and demands of the society when that society is in doldrums and in peril of extinction. To emancipate the good and godly beings, to destroy the evil and then to rehabilitate religion which has been disgraced, a prophet is born. When this does not happen, that society or civilization dies. History affords examples of the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and a host of others who went down, although some of them are now coming to life again. It has been consistently the peculiarity of our sacred soil to have produced at the psychological moment a prophet to save the derelict society in a storm-tossed and angry sea of annihilation, — the society which with the content of its culture and civilization had cut asunder from its moorings of ethical, moral and spiritual values. Secondly, a prophet does not appear alone on the scene; for relief operation and resuscitating human souls, he comes with a cast of hand-picked disciples whom he grooms and disciplines to carry on the mission, in his absence and demise, to fulfilment. Thirdly, the prophet never writes — the exception being Shankaracharya — he speaks. He speaks words of wisdom and chastisement to the erring society; he speaks words of peace and solace, forgiveness, compassion and love. The words are mellifluous; they flow like nectar and life-giving stream of water. It is left to the genius of the groomed disciples to become at a later date the scribes of their Master and exponents of his life and teachings. Sri Ramakrishna answered the description of a prophet's 'Job qualifications', and a little more in the sense that in his life-time six volumes on him were written and published, bearing a stamp of both authority and authenticity. This is conspicuous by its absence in the annals of prophetism; the lives of other prophets are in parts shrouded in mystery and speculation. About the end of the first quarter of the 19th century, photography came into being and Ramakrishna is the only prophet of whom we have the exact image and likeness of what he was in actual life.

Sculpture and painting existed as arts from the dim past but as we have an infinite variation in the numerous idols and paintings done of any other prophet, through the ages, no one can be certain of what exactly a particular prophet looked like. The variations represented at best the inner mood, mystic experience and attitude of the painters or the sculptors. The nature and degree of their zeal for hero-worship with which they were fired was another factor. In the case of Ramakrishna, the image we have, is unsullied and 'untouched'.

The East India Company's gun-boat with the sword and the flute in its hold, afforded an excellent prelude to British rule growing roots in foreign soils. At the turn of the 19th

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century Rule Britannia became a legendary by-word; Britain then ruled over seven seas and the sun never set in the British Empire. Poverty, illiteracy, internecine politics and dissensions and Kilkanny-like cat-fights added grist to the mill of British rule in the country. The British genius adroitly exploited the situation; it established rail roads and communication, police and judiciary, schools and hospitals. Electricity was in the offing. In the spacious urn of British benefits, economic exploitation and mass proselytization on an unprecedented scale went on silently like a chemical process, corroding national character and culture. To stem the tide of degeneration, Ramakrishna's advent in 1836 was singularly significant. By divine ordination, as it were, the Brahmo Samaj movement came in concurrently to act as a buffer, partly to neutralize the insidious influence of foreign rule and impact and partly to keep intact the Indian genius. Pitted against the English education, scientific and technological achievements which would soon usher in a new era of industrial revolution and crass commercialism, the Prince of antithesis stood firm in his own court. True, he was a self-illumined soul but he rejected the formal education. He preferred to remain a simple rustic with a halt in his speech. He disdained all material gains and creature comforts; he married but denied the flesh. The only thing that mattered, the be-all and end-all of life, to him, was God-intoxication and God-realization. He spurned all kinds of miracles, and yet he himself became a victim to one or two. During his yogic period of life, radiant light-rays began to emanate from the body. He covered the body in the day time and remained indoors. He rubbed his nose on the floor till it bled and prayed to the Mother to take off this effulgent beauty. . . . Comparing the society in which Ramakrishna lived and moved to the present times, it would not be profanity to admit that we are worse off today with bribery, corruption, nepotism, black-marketing, profiteering, slanders and smears, character-assassination and hundred and one ills — notwithstanding the political independence we got over a decade and a half ago. Was the time of his advent too early? That is the lay man's doubt.

The Incarnation of divinity is in no way immune from the laws of nature. The incarnate lives and strives, like any other man, to reach the goal. The first three stages of the life of Sri Ramakrishna, childhood and struggle, marriage with concomitant duties and obligations, spiritual apprenticeship and unsullied divination are the examples. Each stage was crowded with events like a package-deal, but the greatest concentration was in the last phase of about 8 years out of a life of 50, before the curtain dropped on the grand finale of an exquisite drama when the Master's disciples and some of the distinguished householder devotees began to come in. In fact, the Master was restive and impatient. In the eventide of life, he would perambulate to and fro in the room, look out at the Ganges at the end of a beat, to have the last glimpse of lingering sun-down. Then would well out of the depths of his heart the pathetic and wistful cry: Mother, where are my children? And they did come one by one — to the unbounded delight and joy of the Master who recognized them at the first sight. Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, were casting a net into the sea; and Jesus saith unto them — 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And they straight-away left their nets and followed him'. The discipleship enlarged to 12 in time. The five Rishis practising severe penance had advised Prince Siddhartha to follow them; but they changed their seats to become the first five disciples of Buddha when he attained Enlightenment. Other prophets had likewise their chosen few. Like St. Paul to Jesus, Anand to Buddha, Padmapada to Shankaracharya, Swami Vivekananda was to Sri Ramakrishna the right-hand disciple and leader of the group. Whilst the Master was an antithesis to the age in which he was born he had himself two contrasts in life — first, by his partner and second, by his disciple, Narendra, who was 27 years younger to him. Narendra came of a sophisticated and affluent

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family of urban character; the Master of a poor Brahmin family from a village. The boy was steeped in English education, culture and philosophy; the Master was almost an illiterate, with a lisping voice. The boy was strong-headed and pragmatic for all practical purposes; the Master was a complete surrender to the Divine will and knew nothing but his Mother. To a direct question, a more positive answer was given. 'Have you seen God?'—to this question came the Master's reply: 'Yes, I have seen him more intensely than I see you before me; I have conversed with him more intimately than I am doing with you now.' In a brief span of a few years the metamorphosis was complete; the boy Narendra slipped into the garb of Sannyasin and as Swami Vivekananda, he passed into history as the greatest exponent of the life and teachings of his Master to whom he paid the handsome tribute:

'The books are theories, he was the realization. This man had in fifty-one years lived the five thousand years of national spiritual life, and so raised himself to be an object-lesson for future generations.'

DIVINE IMAGES

K. V. ADVANI

SRI AUROBINDO has poured out his poetic thoughts and visions in *Savitri*. There is poetic delicacy and charm. There is limpid coolness in his flow of Muse. The artist in him has attained consummate skill. The rich inspiration reaches steep and giddy heights. A very refined vehicle is required to communicate truthfully his mellow wisdom. Goethe is the nearest model in the line. Emerson stands at a distant point on the same road.

In Goethe's poetry there is scientific and psychological way of expression. Sometimes there is profusion of thought. Sometimes there is sublime chastity. The soul of the poet is never wavering. He is at a high pitch of thought and emotion.

Emerson says, 'On the brink of the waters of life and truth, we are miserably dying. The inaccessibleness of every thought but that we are in, is wonderful. Every thought is a prison; every heaven is also a prison. Therefore we love the poet, the inventor, who in any form, whether in an ode or in an action or in looks and behaviour, has yielded us a new thought. He unlocks our chains and admits us to a new scene.'

Milton says, 'The lyric poet may drink wine and live generously, but the epic poet, he who shall sing of the gods and their descent unto men, must drink water out of a wooden bowl. For poetry is not "Devil's wine", but God's wine.'

Sri Aurobindo says in *Savitri*:

'The centuries pile man's follies and man's crimes
Upon the countless crowd of Nature's ills;
As if the world's stone-load was not enough.
A crop of miseries obstinately is sown
By his own hand in the furrows of the gods,
The vast increasing tragic harvest reaped
From old misdeeds buried by oblivious Time.'

A pitiless story of life indeed. All the maladies which crush healthy and vibrant growth, need patient and studious labour to be uprooted. The divine potentialities need constant tapping. If it is hard to follow divine mysteries in a tedious way, there is a simple poetic way of following divine truth, by means of chaste thinking and conjuring up divine images.

Poetry of the highest type gives profuse expression to rich and resonant imagery,

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which elevate man's dull soul to higher planes.

'The chords of the divine musician's lyre' is a beautiful image. The singing soul is vibrantly full of music. The chords of lyre give sweet music. But if they are snapped, the music dies away. It is therefore our holy duty to remain on guard. The causal factors have to be studied. Only a constructive and optimistic approach to life can stop the rot.

'Invisible the giant actors tread,
And man lives like some secret
player's mask.'

Man has many masks. Dubious values, subtle sense of exploitation, love for sensate values are some of the factors that compel man to have masks and hide his reality. Ultimately, the divinity in man has to transmute all false values, so that these false masks may drop away and man may attain liberation.

'A tranquil breadth of sky, windless and
still
Watching the world like a mind of
unplumbed thought,
A silent space musing and luminous
Uncovered by the morning to delight,
A green tangle of trees upon a happy hill
Made into a murmuring nest by
southern winds,
These are his images and parallels,
His kin in beauty and in depth his
peers.'

There is no heavenly charm; nature's beauty is working in a healthy way. Satyavan who is endowed with divine potentialities, is all the same a tenant of eternity. Each one of us is faced with the same challenge of life.

Sri Aurobindo depicts a true picture of man in the following words, which are full of resonant music and mellow wisdom:

'Into the fallen human sphere they came,
Faces that wore the Immortal's glory still,
Voices that communed still with the
thoughts of God,
Bodies made beautiful by the Spirit's
light,
Carrying the magic word, the mystic fire,
Carrying the Dionysian cup of joy,
Approaching eyes of a diviner man.
Lips chanting an unknown anthem of
the soul,
Feet echoing in the corridors of Time.'

Any man of culture and education will be able to understand these lines sensitively and with depth of emotion. What avails a man, if he cannot rise to divine heights! The opaque mind must regain its original transparency. The lethargic soul should remain alive to the sublime beauty of divinity. Where is that 'Immortal glory'? Do we feel the spiritual touch of beauty, that comes from 'Spirit's light'? Is there any real feeling of the 'mystic fire'? Is there making of the 'diviner man' in us? Are our lips capable of chanting an 'unknown anthem of the soul'? Can we feel the stamp of eternity in our every day life? These are the basic points that need the artist's wisdom and poet's music, so that the beauty and truth of 'poetry of life' could be canalized in our every day thoughts and conduct.

We are all born idolaters, and idolatry is good, because it is in the nature of man. Who can get beyond it? Only the perfect man, the God-man. The rest are all idolaters. So long as we see this universe before us, with its forms and shapes, we are all idolaters. This is a gigantic symbol we are worshipping. He who says he is the body is a born idolater. We are spirit, spirit that has no form or shape, spirit that is infinite, and not matter. Therefore, any one who cannot grasp the abstract, who cannot think of himself as he is, except in and through matter, as the body, is an idolater. And yet how people fight among themselves, calling one another idolaters! In other words, each says, his idol is right, and the others' are wrong.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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ADVAITA VEDANTA—A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

BRAHMACHARI MADHAVAN

AMONG the various religious philosophies of the world, the Advaita Vedanta, as expounded by Bhagavan Śankara, holds a unique position. To quote a western orientalist, Mr. Thibaut, 'The doctrine advocated by Śankara is from a purely philosophical point of view, and apart from all theological considerations, the most important and interesting one which has arisen on Indian soil ; neither those forms of Vedanta which diverge from the view represented by Śankara nor any of the non-Vedantic systems can be compared with the so-called orthodox Vedanta in boldness, depth and subtlety of speculation.'[1] The purpose of this article is to present here in a nutshell the philosophy of Śankara in the light of Sadananda's Prakaraṇa treatise, the *Vedāntasāra*, and the plan it lays before us to realize the ultimate Reality advocated therein.

Now, what is Vedanta ? Sadananda defines it as 'the evidence of the Upaniṣads'.[2] We shall see in what follows, as to how this definition holds before us Vedanta as both the knowledge of ultimate Reality as well as the means to attain it.

The word 'Vedanta' etymologically consists of two syllables : 'Veda' — which primarily refers to the four revealed scriptures of the Hindus viz., the Ṛk, Yajur, Sāma and Atharva Samhitas — and 'anta' meaning the end or conclusion. Thus Vedanta means 'the ending or concluding portion of the Vedas' which consequently refers to the Upaniṣads. In a broader sense, we may interpret the word to mean 'the culmination or acme of knowledge', for 'Veda' being derived from the root 'Vid' 'to know', means 'knowledge'. Interpreting Vedanta in these two ways has a special relevance to its uniqueness among the other philosophies of the world. Almost all the religious philosophies of the world derive their authenticity from revelations and depend on such revelation for their knowledge of the ultimate Reality. But, modern scientific philosophers with their natural bias for reason read a sort of determinism in these revelational conclusions. It is indeed a relevant question in philosophy, whether, metaphysics should precede epistemology or epistemology should precede metaphysics. Vedanta viewed in the context of the former meaning as the concluding portion of revealed texts, naturally gives metaphysics a decided precedence over epistemology, but this preference to metaphysics does not hamper it from satisfying the demands of epistemological analysis. As the following discussions would show, even if one refuses to owe any allegiance to revealed texts and attempts an approach to the conclusions of Vedanta through a pure criticism of knowledge, one would have to submit to their unassailed validity — in fact such an approach was experimented by a bold Indian, the Buddha, and the result of his enquiry is well-known to all liberal thinkers — and whence the second interpretation of Vedanta as 'the culmination of knowledge'. However, according to the Vedantins, metaphysics and epistemology are always interdependent.

SUBJECT-MATTER OF VEDANTA

As we have noted above, if Upaniṣads are accepted as the valid source of knowledge of Vedanta, it behoves us to elucidate the exact teachings of the Upaniṣads. The author of *Vedāntasāra* would explain it as 'the identity between Brahman (the pure spiritual and unitary Principle of existence) and the individual self'.[3] Here a little retrospection into the

[1] Introduction to *Brahma Sutra*, p. xiv.

[2] वेदान्तो नाम उपनिषत् प्रमाणम् —*V. S.*, 1.

[3] जीवब्रह्मैक्यं शुद्धचैतन्यं प्रमेयं तत्रैव वेदान्तानां तात्पर्यात् —*V. S.*, 27.
Refer also Sankara in his *Vivekachudamani*, sloka 249.

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origin and development of philosophical speculation in India would bring home to us the significance of this assumption.

'Man is like an infinite spring, coiled up in a small box, and that spring is trying to unfold itself; and all the social phenomena that we see are the result of this trying to unfold,' observed Swami Vivekananda in a lecture at the Century Club, Boston, on 'the Spirit and Influence of Vedanta' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, p. 389). The earliest murmurs of this unfolding of the human spirit, so far known to human history, comes from the Vedas of the Hindus. In the words of Prof. Max Muller, 'They (the Vedas) are to us unique and priceless guides in opening before our eyes tombs of thought richer in relics than the Royal Tomb of Egypt and more ancient and primitive in thoughts than the oldest hymns of the Babylonian or Arcadian poets'. One can read through their pages various stages of the progressive development of philosophic wisdom of man from its embryonic beginning. Eternal Freedom is the endeavour of all philosophical enquiry. This eagerness of the human soul finds its earliest expression in the polytheistic-like conception of gods in the earliest hymns of the Vedas. Safety of human life largely depended on the apparently mysterious working of the awe-inspiring forces of nature and hence their deification and worship. Thus in the Ṛg Veda we find the mention of as many as thirty-three such deified forces of nature or gods, whom Yaska in his Nirukta reduces into three representative deities, Surya in the heavens, Vayu or Indra in the atmospheric region and Agni in earth.[4]

But thought is a natural instinct in man which distinguishes him from the rest of the beings. It cannot rest content with ill-conceived notions and vague aspirations. It dashes against the dense veil of conventional beliefs and seeks to penetrate into the so-called mysteries of nature. Thus as we proceed through the pages of the Vedas, we find nature lifting her veils one after another and giving out the secrets of her existence to the penetrating intellect of the Vedic Aryans. Manifold forces of nature confess to man, their allegiance to a Supreme Power, their common over-lord, whom the Vedic seers preferred to designate as Prajapati or Hiranyagarbha — a theological expression of a philosophic concept.[5] In the knowledge of the ultimate Truth of existence, when this transition, from polytheistic notion to monotheistic notion, has been effected, it does not take long for the weightier monistic claim to supersede the former two. Of the many evidences of such evolution to monism we shall quote here only one from the *Satapatha Brahmana*, XLIV: 'Verily in the beginning this (universe) was Brahman. It created the gods, and having created gods, He made them ascend to this world. . . . Then Brahman itself went up to the sphere beyond. Having gone up, it considered, "How can I descend again to the world". Then it descended again by means of these two — Nāma and Rūpa, name and form. Whatever has name and form indeed are the two great forces of Brahman.' This conception of Brahman or the cosmic Principle as the source and essence of the whole phenomenal existence is the result of an objective enquiry into the ultimate reality of the world. The Upaniṣads, being the concluding portions of the Vedas, naturally echo this conception in such passages as 'Verily He is the indwelling Spirit within all. Heaven for His head, Sun and Moon for His eyes, the quarters for His ears, the revealed Vedas for His speech, the wind for His vital forces, the universe His heart and from His feet (issues) the earth' (*Mund. Up.*, II. i. 4).[6] But, though the Upaniṣads thus carried on the concept of Brahman and other conclusions of the objective enquiries of the Vedas, they did not rest

[4] The reader may refer here to the traditional classification of gods hinted at in *Rig Veda*, I. 139. 11.

[5] Refer *Rig Veda*, X. 121, where creation has been conceived in a monotheistic level as the work of Hiranyagarbha.

[6] Refer also *Ch. Up.*, VII. 25. 2, *Mund. Up.*, II. 2. 11, *Aitareya Up.*, III. 3 and such other passages.

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content with them. However sublime and of far-reaching consequence those discoveries may be, the very fact that they are the result of an objective enquiry vouchsafe man with only a partial knowledge of the truth. Man stands on a cross-road, between the alluring offers of the objective world and the absorbing demand of the subjective self for freedom from all limitations. The more the human thought evolved the greater did man feel this stress of the soul. The futility of an objective knowledge divested of a corresponding knowledge of the inner self was becoming patent to the thinkers of the Upaniṣads. To this exceptionally practical people, dawning of an idea in their brain meant realizing it. So, they set out to explore the inner depths of their own selves. This shifting of the focus of enquiry from external to internal realities is explicit from such Upaniṣadic passages as: "The self-existent (God) has rendered the senses (so) defective that they go outward and hence man sees the external and not the internal self. (Only perchance) some wise man desirous of immortality turns his eyes inward and beholds the inner Ātman' (*Kaṭha Up.*, II. 4. 1). They minutely observed, classified and analyzed the contents of human personality, nay dived deep into the very consciousness that observed, classified and analyzed; and the result was amazing! 'Desirous of immortality' the wise man turned his eyes inward, but found out that *his very* nature was *immortality* —

नित्यशुद्धमुक्तसत्य स्वभावं as the author of *Vedāntasāra* puts it. Still more; what he thought to be Brahman, the ultimate unitary Principle of the external world, was his very Ātman (*Br. Up.*, I. 4. 10) and that the world of diversity perceived external to himself was a mere illusion! The quest of human soul ended with this realization. As the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* would explain it, 'The sages, who have attained the Self, find satisfaction in wisdom; they are perfected in soul, non-attached and tranquil. Having realized the all-pervading Spirit everywhere, those wise and devout ones enter into the all'.[7] And according to the Advaitins, it is this immortal non-dual knowledge that is the central teaching of the Upaniṣads, that signify Vedanta — जीवब्रह्मैक्यं शुद्धचैतन्यं प्रमेयं तत्रैव वेदान्तानां तात्पर्यात् ।

Utility of Vedantic Study

As is obvious from the above discussion the prime concern of the Upaniṣads is to release the human soul from all the limitations attendant on its worldly existence and to bring in an awareness of its inherent divinity. In accordance with this character, Bhagavān Śankara interprets the word 'Upaniṣad' itself thus: 'This is called Upaniṣad because it mitigates such numerous evils as birth, old age, disease etc., for those who approach this knowledge of Brahman with loving eagerness; or it is called so since it leads to the supreme Brahman and completely weakens or destroys the ignorance etc., that are the causes of the world, for traditionally, the meaning of the root '*sad*' preceded by '*upa*' and '*ni*' is shown to be so.'[8] So, in order to make the teachings of these Upaniṣads effective in dispelling our ignorance a mere intellectual apprehension of it will not do. Such a mediate knowledge cannot give us an immediate release from bondage. Hence the author of the *Vedāntasāra* presents us with the essence of this Advaita Vedanta in all its practical implications. He commences his treatise with a description of the qualifications pre-requisite for a seeker after this

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[7] संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः ते सर्वगं सर्वतः प्राप्यधीरा युक्तात्मानः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति । —*Mund. Up.*, III. 2. 5.

[8] य इमां ब्रह्मविद्यामुपयन्त्यात्मभावेन श्रद्धाभक्तिपुरःसराः सन्तस्तेषां गर्भजन्मजरारोगाद्यनर्थपूरं निशातयति परं वा ब्रह्म गमयत्यविद्यादिसंसारकारणं चात्यन्तमवसादयति विनाशयतीत्युपनिषत् उपनिपूर्वस्य सदेरेवमर्थस्मरणात् ।

Mund. Up. Bhashya, Sambandhabhasyam — Upanishad Nirukti. English trans. by Swami Gambhiranandа's *Eight Upanishads*, Vol. II, p. 81.

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knowledge and goes on to explain the philosophy of the Upaniṣads or Vedanta as an expert teacher would in the presence of a competent student, and then after showing the method by which the student should make this mediate knowledge an immediate realization of his soul, concludes the work with a description of the condition of *Jīvan-mukti* or liberation even in this body.

Qualifications of a Student Entering into the Study of Vedanta

The qualifications prescribed, for competency to enter into a study of Vedanta are, to put briefly: (1) A sound intellectual background with regard to the general teaching of the Vedas and books auxiliary to them; (2) a calm and clean mind free from all worries, acquired as a result of fulfilling all the duties and obligations of life; and (3) possessing the traits known as the *Sādhanacatuṣṭaya* or the four-fold aid to higher life, viz., *Nityānityavastuviveka* (ability to discriminate between the eternal and the ephemeral), *Ihāmutraphalabhogavirāgaḥ* (renunciation of enjoyment of the fruits of action here in this world, or hereafter), *Śamādi ṣaṭkasampatti* [the possession of the six virtues known as *Śama* (control of mind), *Dama* (control of the senses), *Uparati* (holding the restrained senses from drifting back to sense-objects), *Titikṣa* (fortitude), *Samādhānam* (power of concentration), *Śraddhā* (faith in the teachings of the scriptures and the Guru) and *Mumukṣutvam* (eagerness to liberate oneself from the evils of the worldly existence or *Saṃsāra*)].

Fulfilling the aforesaid conditions is no doubt a Herculean task and hence it may appear to be an almost impossible demand. But, if we consider the sublimity of the goal aimed at, which is nothing short of a knowledge 'knowing which everything in this world becomes known', we are bound to be convinced of the legitimacy of the demand. Moreover, a seeker after the Self proposes to undertake an expedition, as it were, into his own inner Self and as Swami Vivekananda aptly observed, 'From our childhood upwards we have been taught only to pay attention to things external, but never to things internal. To turn the mind, as it were, inside, stop it from going outside, and then to concentrate all its powers and throw them upon the mind itself, in order that it may know its own nature, analyze itself, is a very hard work' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, p. 130). It needs a long and graded course of arduous discipline to train the mind to turn back to its own source and that is the rationale of the above demand.

Practical Application of the Philosophy

Obviously a person possessed of the said qualifications cannot rest satisfied with a life of sweet innocence in this world. His soul pangs for perfection, for freedom from all worldly limitations. So, it is but natural that he seeks to find out some competent guide who could help him out of this predicament. And especially in matters relating to the secrets of the Self it is imperative that the knowledge should come only from another perfected soul. So, commenting on the passage, *gurumevābhigaccet* of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, Śri Śankara says that even if one is an adept in the knowledge of the scriptures, one should not seek knowledge of Brahman without the help of a Guru.[9]

The method that a teacher adopts to enlighten such a person on the non-dual Knowledge is known as अध्यारोपापवादन्यायम् or the method of superimposition and negation. As already stated Upaniṣads hold that the individual self seen *sub specie aeternitatis* is Brahman and as a corollary to this we have, the world-variety is a mere illusion. But the common man's idea of his own self is far from any such experience. To him a world of bewildering diversity externally existent is a perceived fact. So, a philosophy that proposes to help man out of this illusion should

[9] *Sankara Bhashya on Mund. Up.*, I. 2. 12; Refer also *Vedantasara*, 30.

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try to explain the cause of this anomaly and show us its remedy. This is the exact intention of the above method.

Now, the Advaitins do not deny that an empirical world bound up in space, time and cause is perceived; but they would interpret that if we take the pain of probing a little into the intrinsic nature of the principal categories of that existence viz., space, time and cause, we would know that they are self-contradictory. Let us try to analyze these categories for ourselves: What is space? Space, one has to say, is the locus of matter. Then, is space itself a material substance to be the receptacle of that matter or is there a possibility of seeing a space completely separated from matter? We have to confess our ignorance of a space other than its mere name! So also with time. Time as we commonly understand is the duration of a particle of matter to move from one point in space to another. But, is there anything in such a movement other than matter and motion to designate as 'time'? The answer to this question too is no better than to the previous one. Now, there remains only the third concept namely, cause, for us to examine. To the question, 'What do we mean by this term?', we have to answer, 'By cause we mean "an invariable antecedent condition of an effect".' It leaves scope then for a further query, 'What is an effect?' The only feasible reply can be that 'an effect is that which necessarily follows such an invariable concomitant condition' which explanation, if further pressed, ultimately lands us into a fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum*. The conclusion of such analysis as above is that the world-phenomena can neither be ultimately existent nor absolutely non-existent — we can call it ōnly 'Unique' which has only ignorance for its basis.

It is this principle of ignorance underlying the empirical variety that is designated as *ajñāna* or *Māyā* by the Advaitins. *Vedāntasāra* defines it as, 'something positive which can neither be called "is" nor "is not", which is of the nature of the three *guṇas* and opposed to true knowledge'.[10] It is illustrated through the well-known classical simile of the mis-perception of a snake where there is only a rope (असर्पभूतायां रज्जौ सर्पारोपवत्) that is to say, due to wrong perception the empirical world is seen where only Brahman exists. As the snake totally vanishes when rope is perceived, Māyā, with its products, the world-phenomena, vanishes, without leaving behind any trace of itself, when Brahman, the underlying Reality, is perceived.

This Māyā is considered as beginningless, for the very mind that enquires into its beginning being only a product of it, cannot succeed in finding out the source of its own cause.

To eradicate this Māyā, which is the source of all our bondage, we should detect it in all its facets. As Swami Vivekananda observed, 'In acquiring knowledge we make use of generalization, and generalization is based upon observation. We first observe facts, then generalize and then draw conclusions or principles' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, p. 129). Following this method in acquiring knowledge of the world-phenomena, we can observe three strata of existence through which we pass on almost every day — waking, dreaming and deep-sleep.

In the waking state, we identify ourselves with our gross bodies and perceive a gross universe, objectively existent. For the sake of our study we can divide this objective universe of the waking state into its component parts such as the diverse regions of existence and the various types of inhabitants. The Vedantins classify the universe into fourteen regions — seven higher regions beginning with our earth (Bhūr), viz., Bhūr, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahar, Janaḥ, Tapaḥ and Satyam; and seven lower regions viz., Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Rasātala, Talātala, Mahātala and Pātāla — and the inhabitants of the world into four types — *jarāyuja* (those that are born of womb e.g., men, beast etc.), *aṇḍaja* (those born of eggs like

[10] *V. S.*, 34; Refer also *Vivekachudamani*, slokas 108-110 and *Bhamati*, II. ii. 28.

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birds and reptiles etc.), *svedaja* (those born of moisture, like lice, mosquitoes etc.) and *udbhijja* (those born of soil, like trees, creepers etc.) (*Vedāntasāra*, 104 & 105). We can reduce the contents of the above world by further analysis into their rudimentary cause, the five gross elements (*sthūla bhūtas*)— ether (*Ākāśa*), air (*Vāyu*), fire (*Agni*), water (*Āpaḥ*) and earth (*Kṣiti*), for, there is nothing in the objective world which is not a combination of these five elements. Our gross bodies too, being the products of food, are made up of the above five gross elements — note here the name given to it by the Vedantins : *Annamayakośa*.

In the second plane of our existence namely, the dream-state, we find ourselves in a different subtle world. At this level, the gross world and the gross bodies do not exist for us. But we can know by observation and analysis that this dream world is a creation of our own minds (*Antaḥkaraṇa*) with the help of the impression of the waking experiences left in them.[11] We also know that our minds are the products of the essence of the food we take in, and as such they, as well as the dream-world are constituted of the five subtle elements (*sūkṣma bhūtas*). The Vedantins classify the said subtle bodies (*sūkṣma śarīra*) into the following components : (1) the *Antaḥkarana* (constituting the intellect or *Buddhi* and the faculty of desiring and doubting etc., or *Manas*), (2) the five organs of perception or *Jñānendriyās* [*Śravaṇam* (ear), *Tvak* (skin), *Akshi* (eyes), *Ghrāṇam* (nose) and *Jiḥvā* (tongue)], (3) the five organs of action or *Karmendriyas* [*Vāk* (speech), *Pāṇi* (hands), *Pādāḥ* (feet), *Pāyu* (organ of evacuation) and *Upastha* (of generation)] and (4) the Vital forces (divided into five, *Prāṇa*, *Apāna*, *Vyāna*, *Udāna* and *Samāna*, according to their functions).[12] The *sūkṣma śarīra* has been studied through a further classification of these seventeen components into three sheaths viz., *Prāṇamaya* (vital sheath), *Manomaya* (mental sheath) and *Vijñānamaya* (intellectual sheath).

We have yet another state of existence i.e., the deep sleep-state where both the above-mentioned subtle and gross worlds and the respective bodies are all sublated — we are left here with no objects or minds. Yet we know that we, as the underlying consciousness, existed even in this state, for on waking up we say, 'we had a sound repose'. That there was a veil of *ajñāna* obstructing the manifestation of our inherent knowledge is also attested by our experience 'we did not know anything at that time'. Now, where did those subtle and gross worlds of the dream and waking states go during the sleep? We have to say that they both got merged in that *ajñāna* which existed as the only adjunct of the soul in that state and again manifested out of it at the time of waking. This is possible because it can be known through the analysis, that the rudimentary elements, that go to make the substance of both the gross and subtle bodies and the respective worlds, themselves are made of only the three *guṇas* viz., *sattva* (the medium of manifestation), *rajas* (dynamic) and *tamas* (inertia), which in their turn are the integral parts of *ajñāna*. Therefore it follows that the whole objective world-phenomena are but the effect (*Kārya*) of *ajñāna*, their cause (*Kāraṇa*). Hence the *ajñāna* that existed as the adjunct of the self during sleep is known as *kāraṇa śarīra* or Causal Body. This *ajñāna*, as stated above, is dissolved at the dawn of Knowledge.[13]

The Vedantins name these above three states of existence as *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *suṣupti* and designate the Self associated with

[11] Refer Sri Sankara in *Vivekachudamani*, slokas 97 & 98 :

स्वप्ने तु बुद्धिः स्वयमेवजाग्रत्कालीन नानाविधवासनाभिः कर्तृत्वभावं प्रतिपद्य राजते ।

[12] *V. S.*, 63, 65, 75 & 77 and *Vivekachudamani*, slokas 92-95.

[13] Refer Sri Sankara in the *Vivekachudamani*, sloka 123 :

माया मायाकार्यं सर्वं महदादिदेहपर्यन्तम् ।
असदिदमनात्मतत्त्वं विद्धि त्वं मरुमरीचिकाकल्पम् ।

"Maya and all its products beginning from *Mahat* (cosmic intelligence) down to the body, are *anatmatatvam* or non-self and hence unreal; know them to be like the mirage in the desert."

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them as Viśva, Taijasa and Prājña (*Māṇḍūkya Kārika*, 1. 1), and the Self in itself unassociated with any of these states as the Turiya.[14]

We have so far analyzed the existence from the point of view of the individual Self.. We can also have a parallel classification of existence from a cosmic level. Our ordinary consciousness that we are but finite parts of an infinite universe necessitates such an analysis for our dehypnotization.

The cosmic parallel of the above division, Viśva, Taijasa and Prājña, arrived at by a similar analysis, are Vaiśvānara or Virāt (the cosmic Self in association with a gross-universe), Hiraṇyagarbha (the cosmic Self when in association with the cosmic subtle world) and *Īśvara* (the cosmic Self in association with the world-cause or *Māyā*). This cosmic Soul in Itself, unassociated with *Māyā* (*samaṣṭyajñāna*) and its evolutes, is what is meant by the term, Brahman. As in the case of the individual *ajñāna*, this cosmic *ajñāna* too is dissolved on the dawn of the knowledge of Brahman. This Universal Self or Brahman and the Turiya of our individual analysis, being both spiritual, are one and the same. Arriving at this identity is the aim of Vedanta and that is the meaning of the great Vedantic dictum, '*Tat tvam asi*' (*Ch. Up.*, 6. 9. 3) — *Tvam* (thou, meaning the individual Self), *Asi* (art), *Tat* (that, meaning the Universal Self or Brahman).[15] The method of analysing and negating all that was Māyā or *ajñāna*, as we did above, is known as *apavāda* in contradistinction to which *adhyāropa* is the superimposing of the Māyā and its products on Brahman, when we are in ignorance.

Hearing this ultimate nature of Ātman from the preceptor through the said process is called *śravaṇa* and assimilation of that knowledge through critical reflection is known as *manana*. Even the conviction of the Truth gained through such reflection often fails to untie the knots of our hearts created by beginningless *avidyā* (*Vivekachudamani*, sl. 277), and this can only be accomplished by uninterrupted meditation on the conviction that 'I am Brahman'. This process is called *nididhyāsana* and it is to be carried on till we gain *aparokṣānubhūti* or direct realization of Brahman. 'The Self, my dear Maitreyi, should verily be realized : should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon.'[16] *Vedāntasāra* defines *nididhyāsana* as, 'a stream of ideas of the same kind as those of Brahman, the One without a second, to the exclusion of such foreign ideas as those of the body etc.' (*V.S.*, 192).

The Consummation

Vedanta lays stress on realization, of direct perception, in this very life, even while in our present bodies, 'If there be a God we must see Him ; if there is a Soul we must perceive it', as Swami Vivekananda puts it. The one who has had this *sākṣātkāra* or actual direct realization of Ātman is called a *Jīvan-mukta* (*V.S.*, 217). Such a person, having realized his real Self which is of the nature of *Sat-cit-ānanda*, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute, becomes self-contented, free from all attachments and afflictions. He is not affected by the so-called good and bad, virtue and vice and other pairs of opposites of this *samsāra*. Though his body lasts till its natural span of life, he does not feel any identification as 'I' or 'mine' with it. (See also *Vivekachudamani*, sl. 431). He has neither any duty nor obligation, yet he always engages himself in doing good to others because it is his nature, (अहेतुकदयासिन्धुर्बन्धुरानमतां सताम्) as Śri Śankara puts it. This is the culmination of Vedantic teaching — this *jīva-brahmaikyaṁ*, or non-duality of Individual Self and the Supreme Self. Can there be a better knowledge than this ?

[14] शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः । —*Mandukyopanishad*, 7.

[15] Ref. *V. S.*, 169 and *Vivekachudamani*, sloka 241.

[16] *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, 2. 4. 5.

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MATTER, MIND AND INTUITION

BRAHMACHARI PRASUN

MATTER — A REFLECTION OF GOD

MATTER appears as a visible form, but in reality, it is composed of electro-magnetic waves. It is a force. It appears to us as solids, liquids, gases, heat, light, electricity and energy. It is expressed in various forms, but is not what it appears to be. As for example, all the so-called solids that we see are not solid. They are nothing but flying atoms held together by a magnetic force. Nothing is solid. Science has proved that all matter is nothing but electro-magnetic waves or frozen light. Metaphysicians say that frozen light is frozen God-vibration and frozen light is matter. Thus matter is a vibration of God or matter exists as a reflection of God. But to deny the existence of matter is a foolish action. Just as waves can not exist without the ocean, electromagnetic waves can not exist without the Cosmic power. In other words, creation can not exist without God, the creating power. But the creating power exists with or without creation. Thus the world seems to be created through the vibration of God. To continue to feed and care for the body while at the same time denying the existence of matter is a blind contradiction of one's own belief. When a man comes to know that the body and matter do not really exist except as a manifestation of Spirit, then only he has risen above them both by realizing himself as spirit and can say 'Take no heed for the body'. He does not recognize the existence of matter because he has attained the divine consciousness.

In nature we see that things come into being, grow and then decay and perish only to be born in a more or less identical form. The law of causation is the root of all events in the world of physical events. In other words, the world is a cosmos, and not a chaos and space is swallowing matter in the course of evolution. Let us, therefore, behold naught but beauty, naught but good, naught but truth, naught but the Spirit i.e. God.

MIND — A VIBRATION OF GOD

The world was created through the vibration of Spirit or God. Matter is one vibration and mind is another. Mind is the connecting link between the material world and the self. New qualities emerge from elements organized in a certain pattern. The atom is a great deal more than the sum of its constituents. It is an entity that has capacities and powers that are different in kind from the particles that constitute it. The atoms in turn combine to form molecules that are new entities with new functions and powers. In this manner new qualities, new modes of action, new entities and values arise when physical structures become more and more complex and organized. Matter itself is the outcome of the organization of protons and electrons which are below the level of matter. At a later stage of evolution mind arises as the expression of a living organism of an exceedingly high degree of complexity. Both matter and mind represent stages in evolution. Mind is a refined form of matter. It is capable of reflecting the potentialities of spirit much better than the sense organs. If mind were not illumined by Spirit, it could reveal nothing. It is the light of the self that works through the mind and the sense organs. Thoughts, imaginations, feelings, volitions, ideals and purposes are made manifest by the mind. The Spirit gradually releases itself from the bondage of matter and every act of release is followed by a new sense of freedom. Man makes use of the higher thought to promote his spiritual growth. The Spirit dormant in the lower forms of life bursts forth into full blaze in the human form. An error entertained by

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one person is called an 'illusion', while an error that deludes all mankind is called a 'delusion'. In meditation, one feels the consciousness of ever-new peace which can stand the challenge of all delusions of cosmic motion pictures like physical pain, passive pleasures, sorrows and all mental dualities.

Intuition — A Realization of God

Intuition is the faculty of the soul to know the truth about everything. It requires no medium of sense experience, or reason. It connects a true reason with the ego and soul. This faculty, like many others, can not be developed without exercise. It comes to man as a calm and haunting feeling. Real intuition can never be wrong. All things known by intuition are invariably true, both materially and intellectually. Pure reason and calm feeling lead to intuition. Distorted, sceptical reason and emotional feeling overcloud intuition. In order to live righteously and have a successful life, we must develop the power of the five senses of touch, smell, hearing, sight and taste, by stimulating them with concentration. We must also develop the faculty of intuition. Intuition really means soul perception. In other words, one enters into Cosmic Consciousness through intuition.

Intuition can be classified as (a) latent intuition, (b) semi-developed intuition, developed through frequent but unconscious exercise in business or anything else and (c) consciously developed intuition, won by meditation. Intuition is developed in the following ways: (1) Commonsense — by applying and exercising it, (2) daily introspection and analysis, (3) depth of thought and continued activity in one direction, (4) calmness, and (5) best of all, by meditation, holding to its calm after-effects. By the development of intuition, we can outgrow the law of cause and effect in our life. Intuition tunes the mental radio so that it can intercept all vibrations which otherwise are deflected by diverse currents. We can then find the presence of Cosmic Consciousness reflected in Cosmic Vibration. We can then expand our consciousness from the body to the universe and feel the all-permeating perennial Bliss in God.

Man being made in the image of God, has the same potential power within himself. If he enters into the hall of Cosmic Consciousness, he becomes the captain of the ship of his judgement, will and activity. He will then guide his ship of life, ever beholding the polestar of Divine peace shining in the firmament of his deep meditation i.e. realizing Spirit or God.

Affirmation

There must be gradual appearance of more and more suitable vehicles for the manifestation of spirit. No amount of fresh organization can produce what is not already implicit in nature. So consciousness and freedom can not be said to emerge somehow in the course of evolution by the mere organization of matter. The self is the highest truth and the highest value also. If the higher values are not implicit in nature they can never come out by the mere rearrangement and fresh organization of the constituent elements. So they must be already implicit in nature. Nature is then not insentient, but another name for spirit. Thus matter disappears and Spirit shines forth in its full splendour. The finite self becomes identical with the Infinite self in this way and this realization is our self-realization.

Matter and spirit, though to all appearances they seem to be two distinct things, are really two different forms of one substance; and similarly, all the different forces that are known to us, whether in the material or in the internal world, are but varying forms of the manifestation of one Force. We call a thing matter, where that spirit force is manifested less; and living, where it shows itself more; but there is nothing which is absolutely matter at all times and in all conditions.

— Swami Vivekananda.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The article 'Knowledge is Power' by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder leader of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, U.S.A., is a lecture delivered by him on September 27, 1936, and has been made available to us by Mrs. Mallika Clare Gupta, a disciple of the Swami now living in Calcutta.

Swami Tathgatananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, in the article 'Philosophy of Robert Browning', makes a brief study of Robert Browning, the English Poet (1812-89), not as a poet but as a philosopher.

Sri S. C. Das Gupta, from Bombay, has in a small compass given us some of the most important events from the life of Sri Ramakrishna in his article 'Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa — the Prophet Prodigy'.

Sri K. V. Advani from Bombay is a new contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari*.

Br. Madhavan is of the Ramakrishna Order.

Br. Prasun is of the Ramakrishna Order.

SRI LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI

A SHORT man, apologetic of his stature, humble in spirit but conscientious, fully aware of his responsibilities in the positions that he held, little known outside India at that time, had stepped in to carry India's burden as Prime Minister only eighteen months ago when Jawaharlal Nehru, who had been for seventeen years at the helm, was suddenly snatched away by the hand of death. And that was Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. Speculation had been rife for several years as to who would succeed Mr. Nehru. But nothing was known then. India, however, had seen Mr. Shastri, before then, as a peace-maker and solver of many a tough problem, at least in his own party.

Among the many of his qualities which require emulation by other politicians are first of all his eagerness and willingness to hear the other man's point of view, give him a patient hearing. Secondly to stand by his own convictions once they proved correct, in spite of opposition. Thirdly, his matter of fact estimate or pragmatic approach to the problems facing the country. If we happen to glance through the statements that he made in the meetings of the Planning Commission, soon after he had assumed office, we can understand how practical he was in his approach to the needs of the country. His advice was to start such industries which would give an immediate return to the country though they be small. Yet no one can say that he was not an idealist. He had his own ideal. Poverty was the vow that he had taken and service of the country was his ideal and he practised that ideal in his life till the last moment of his life. Motive of personal gain did never enter his mind.

He, who started his life as a humble worker, reached the pinnacle of positions and attained the zenith of glory, that a politician could aspire after. But yet we doubt whether he aspired for it. His life did not show it. How was all this possible? Because of sacrifice. The power of sacrifice is immense. It does not cloud one's mind. It makes one fearless. The power of sacrifice was at the back of all his success, which was not only his personal gain but the gain of the whole country. There was so much of emotional outburst in the capital, where his cremation took place, as also in other places when the news of his death was announced. If only that emotion could be canalized into making his memory living, by following his example of simple living and high thinking, unstinted service and hard work, — we think that would be a more

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fitting way of paying the country's homage to the leader — by even half the number of people who mourned his loss, India could tide over its difficulties more easily.

Mr. Shastri took up the reins of the Government with a legacy of unresolved problems which went on complicating with the passage of time, causing him deep anxiety. First few months of his tenure of office did not show any spectacular changes but his influence was gradually felt, the Planning Commission cut down its figure for the Fourth Plan and gave more importance to agriculture. He established cordial relations with Nepal, a neighbouring country. He showed his mettle when two of India's neighbours wanted to grab chunks of her land by force. The small man no longer remained stunted, his prestige in the country rose as he refused to be intimidated by the enemy and replied effectively in the language they would understand. But just when he was resolving the problems that confronted the country death claimed him. People sincerely mourn the loss of one who had endeared himself to his country within the short span he was in office as Prime Minister.

Mr. Shastri died in the service of the nation and in the cause of peace. Our sympathy and condolences go to his bereaved mother, wife and children. May his soul rest in peace.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE CANDLE OF VISION: By A. E. Pub.: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York, U.S.A. Pp. 175. Price $5.00.

This is an enthralling account of the mystic experiences of the famous Irish literateur George William Russell, otherwise identified in literary circles as A. E. As a lad of but sixteen summers, he came upon a spiritual experience of the highest intensity, and it was not long before a whilom painter and journalist became a spiritualist able to see reality face to face. It is interesting to note that he had been influenced by the Bhagavad Gita. His own life was itself an essay on plain living and high thinking. He chose voluntary poverty and anonymity all through his life. He had practised meditation and was convinced (P. 53) that if 'we brood with love, following the meditation ordained by the Buddha to let our minds pervade the whole world with heart of love', we can permeate the lives of others and be pervaded by them. Even inanimate things could be made to yield; he alludes to a chance 'sentence from a Upanishad' which had conformed to his vision and answered a spiritual problem he had been thinking over, an hour earlier. He was convinced that the Indian sage was not exaggerating when he said that to him who was perfect in meditation, all rivers were sacred as the Ganges and all speech was holy (P. 18). He personally vouches that there was complete oblivion of the body when he was meditating at an unusual hour. He alludes to Sankara's observation that by reason of the presence of the highest Self in us, the mind in us is moved as if moved by another than ourselves (P. 87). He felt a sort of kinship with the Aryan ancestors 'in remote spiritual dawn, when the grand spiritual tradition embodied in Veda and Upanishad was born' (P. 113).

He pleads for a study of mystical Indian literature (P. 133).

Like the Hindu mystics who could not countenance yogic powers for earthly purposes, he feels that 'the turning earthward of that heaven-born power' is a sin against the power which carries us 'from earth to heaven' (P. 148).

He was convinced of the power of Brahmacharya and continence: it is a Promethean fire and only 'by mastery of this power will man be able to ascend to the Paradise' (P. 141).

The rewards of a life of meditation could hardly be better summed up than at p. 174, where the author conjures up that 'divine hour when out of rock, mountain, water, tree or bird or beast or man all that live shall emerge realizing their kinship and return to the Father Being and be amongst Its infinitudes (P. 174).

A book of everlasting merit and value.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE ROSY CROSS: By Arthur Edward Waite. Pub.: University Books Inc., New Hyde Park, N.Y., U.S.A. Pp. 650. Price $10.00.

This is a treatise prepared after a lifetime of study and research on the cult of Rosicrucianism, which in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had been a forbidden field not indistinguishable from black magic and secret occultism. The author traces the origin of Rosicrucianism and examines the various vicissitudes which it had had to undergo. He has also disentangled the 'myths and frauds', the chaff from the grain, and presented to us a picture of the brotherhood in its truly spiritual aspect.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

HARVEST OF GLORY: Pp. 56. Price: 0.50. Publications Division. Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi-6.

This is a plain and unvarnished account of the fateful skirmish which our country had of neces-

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sity to involve itself with Pakistan in August and September last year. It details the many epic battles, heroic engagements, hair-breadth escapes and the valour and strategy of unexcelled and stupendous efficiency. There could be no better record of the worth and valour of our armed forces, engineers, signallers and medical personnel in our hour of greatest peril which had been turned into one of triumph and achievement.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

UNWANTED CHAMPIONS: Pp. 40. Price: 0.25. Publications Division. Ministry of Information, New Delhi-6.

This booklet reproduces the speeches made at the U.N. General Assembly by a Minister of the Kashmir Government which point out clearly how fantastic and false is the Pakistani ruler's claim to espouse the cause of the Muslims in that valley, and how truly and well has our country protected both Kashmir and her people at all critical times.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

MAN BEHIND THE FIGURES. Pp. 31. Publications Division, Ministry of Information, New Delhi-6.

This collection of talks broadcast over the Radio covers a number of interesting and important topics by five eminent men. The topics dealt with preface the various social and economic problems which our country has had to grapple with in recent years, and there can be no doubt whatever that all in all, they contribute to a simplification and even a solution of the manifold problems dealt with.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

INDIA 1965. Pp. 571+108. Price not stated. Publications Division. Ministry of Information, New Delhi-6.

This publication which provides authoritative information on the various facets of our national life and activities, fully sustains the excellence and exhaustiveness of the previous compilations. Two new chapters on India and the world and on Sino-Indian dispute have been added. Altogether it is a stupendous achievement to have compressed into a single volume all the manifold achievements of so vast a country as ours.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

GANDHIJI EXPECTS. Pp. 190. Price: Rs. 3.00. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14.

This extremely well produced brochure sets out the views of Gandhiji in his own words, on the various problems which beset the administrator in India. His utterances on the duties and responsibilities of the ministers have not lost their validity even to this day, (p. 130) and his exhortation to eschew luxuries and dinner parties has a topical value. The keynote of his thesis is that if there 'is any doubt on any measure, one has to recall the face of the poorest and the weakest and see if that would be of any use to him'.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

FASTING IN SATYAGRAHA. ITS USE AND ABUSE: By M. K. Gandhi. Pp. 77. Price: Re. One. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14.

Fasting had been the Mahatma's forte, and it was a singular and an exclusive achievement of his that he was able to solve many a political or social problem in that way. Few are therefore more qualified than he to prescribe the rules and restrictions which a faster has to bear in mind (p. 18 and p. 76). Gandhiji's fast however was a necessary adjunct to his penance and prayer. His own view was prayer 'could work wonders'. 'Gayatri uttered in a humble and concentrated mind in times of national calamities and difficulties is a potent instrument for warding off danger' p. 9. 'Fasting and prayer might seem at times not to respond, not because there is nothing in them but because the right spirit is not behind them' *Ibid.*

S. RAJAGOPALAN

THE GREAT TRIAL: Pp. 46. Price: Re. 1. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14.

In 1922 Mahatmaji was indicted for trial on a charge of sedition and sentenced to a long term. This book reproduces in full the trial which was conducted and also provides a historical background (p. i to xv) for the movement which he had led. The proceedings in court, as the compiler rightly says, shows how the various personages therein had acted with becoming dignity and to what noble and magnanimous lengths Gandhiji himself could go, even whilst receiving a savage sentence.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

ISWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR: By Benoy Ghose. Published by the Publication Division, Government of India, Delhi-6. Pages: 174. Price: Rs. 2.00.

In narrating the life of this remarkable pioneer in the movement of Renaissance in Bengal, the author gives a vivid picture of the conditions that obtained in the country generally and in Bengal particularly, in the last century. The difficulties that Vidyasagar had to face and the determination with which he struggled to wrest the initiative from the hands of the alien ruling power and from the influential sections of reactionary forces in the indigenous society are portrayed in detail. Whether it was in the sphere of social reform or educational innovation or in the initiation of a new age in Bengali letters, Iswara Chandra was always original and his contribution has been of a lasting character.

M. P. PANDIT

IN THE COMPANY OF SAINTS: By K. Ramachandra. Published by Atma-Jyothi Nilayam, Nawalapitiya, Ceylon. Pp. 184. Price Rs. 4.00.

Brought out on the 70th birthday of Sri K. Ramachandra, the well-known writer and exponent of genuine spiritual traditions, this souvenir volume contains 70 selected notable incidents in the lives of God-men, in the East and the West, past and present. There are also selections from some of the meditations of the author.

Speaking of the Chinese mystic Chuang-tse, the author writes: "One day he had a dream that he

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was a butterfly fluttering among the flowers. When he awoke, he said, 'now am I Chuang-tse dreaming of being a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming of being Chuang-tse'?"

The collection begins with Sri Ramana Maharshi who felt helpless to oblige an autograph hunter because 'how could he sign who had no name'! There is Sri Aurobindo whose reply to a suggestion to cultivate 'eminent disciples', was: 'well-known or unknown has absolutely no importance from the spiritual point of view. One man who earnestly pursues the Yoga is of more value than a thousand well-known men'.

Every page of the book has something to teach.

M. P. PANDIT

KANNADA

MAGALIGE DHARMA BODHE: By Kota Vasudev Karant. Published by the author at Nehru Avenue Cross Road, Mangalore. Pp. 234. Price: Rs. 1.25.

In this well-meaning book the author gives detailed advice to parents in the matter of bringing up their daughters and making them dutiful wives and understanding mothers. He describes graphically the temptations to which girls of today are exposed and warns them against the standing pitfalls in the society of the day. His quotations from the scriptures add weight to his impassioned pleading.

M. P. PANDIT

MALAYALAM

THE PRABUDDHA KERALAM: Golden Jubilee Souvenir. Pub.: Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur. Pp. 120. Price: Rs. 3.

On the occasion of the 50th year of its publication the *Prabuddha Keralam* has brought out this attractive special number with the picture of Sri Ramakrishna Temple, Belur Math on the cover page. It contains a good number of thought-provoking articles written by some of the eminent writers of Kerala including the Swamijis of the Ramakrishna Order and the Sanyasinis of Sri Sarada Math, Trichur. The articles with a variety of subjects such as spiritual, moral and educational, the discussions on certain points in the *Gita*, *Bhagavata*, *Upanishads* and *Mahabharata* are highly enlightening. Any spiritual aspirant of the Malayalam-knowing world cannot but enjoy reading this special issue and benefit thereby. It is also informative about the Ramakrishna Movement and its work. The lives of the Holy Trinity of the Ramakrishna Mission namely Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda have been dealt with from various angles by different authors. The publishers deserve praise for their endeavour.

MALATI KERALA VARMA

HINDI — ENGLISH — GUJERATI

SMARAK GRANTH: Published by Sarvangi Vikas Sangh, Kulu (Himalayas). Pp. 330. Price: Rs. 2.00.

In this report of the first general conference (1961) of the Sarvangi Vikas Sangh founded by Sri Ashesha Chaitanyaji there are a number of papers read during the meeting, based upon the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. The ideal is an all-sided spiritual perfection of man. The models are Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda whose life sketches preface the volume. The whole stress is on the practical side of religious life. Included in the volume is a hundred-verse summarised version of the Gita by Sri Ashesha Chaitanyaji.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

A short report of the activities for 1964-65

The Ramakrishna Mission which completed 56 years after its registration (or 68 years after its inception), held its annual general meeting at the Belur Math premises on Sunday, the 2nd January, 1966. The Report of the Governing Body, presented at the meeting showed all-round progress in the fields of education, medical service, spread of culture and service to the poor and backward classes in general. In the year under review (1964-65): (a) the Mission undertook relief for the East Bengal refugees on a vast scale in Assam, Tripura, West Bengal and Dandakaranya — the total amount spent was about Rs. 2,38,000; (b) in its medical institutions the Mission served 19,242 in-patients in its 6 hospitals and 24,23,529 patients through its 50 outdoor dispensaries; (c) in its various educational institutions which included Degree Colleges, B.T. Colleges, Higher Secondary Schools, Multi-purpose Higher Secondary Schools, High Schools, Basic Schools, Elementary Schools, Orphanages, Students' Homes or Hostels, etc., about 58,000 students were educated of whom 16,000 were girls.

Two set-backs for the Mission in 1965 had been the nationalisation of the hospital in Rangoon by the Burma Government, and loss of contact with the centres in East Pakistan due to war. The monks incarcerated in the latter State have since been repatriated.

A commendable development is a proposed centre in NEFA for which steps are being taken.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda

The hundredfourth birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras with special worship on Thursday, January 13, 1966. The celebrations commenced with Mangalarati in the shrine at 5 a.m. followed by Bhajan, Vedic Chanting. The Puja started at 7-35 a.m. and concluded at 12-25 p.m. There was also reading of the *Chandi*, *Kathopanishad* and

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the *Bhagavad Gita*. About 800 devotees attended the worship.

In the evening after Arati in the shrine a few extracts from the Life of Swami Vivekananda were read out, after which Swami Satswarupananda, a former Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* and a senior monk of the Order, spoke on the spiritual aspect of Swamiji's life. He said that though Swami Vivekananda had not left untouched any side of human activity and given a further impetus towards progress to each yet the essential active part in him, even from his boyhood, was always the spirit. To illustrate this point the Swami cited several incidents from the life of Swami Vivekananda.

The Public Celebration came off on Sunday, January 16, 1966 and was held at the Vivekananda Hall. There was an Upanyasam (musical discourse) by Vidyavacaspati Upanyasa Chakravarti S. R. Raghothamacharya on ACHARYA MAHIMA which started at 3-15 p.m. and concluded at 5-15 p.m.

The public meeting with Swami Satswarupananda as the President began at 5-30 p.m. with opening songs. Swami Somananda, Warden, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras, spoke in Tamil. Then Dr. K. C. Varadachari, Vivekananda Professor of Comparative Religion, University of Madras, spoke in English on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, after which prizes, to the winners in the Inter-collegiate Essay Competition, were distributed.

Swami Satswarupananda speaking about Swami Vivekananda's message outlined how his views on economics, social uplift and the like remain yet to be worked out by the country. After the President's speech a vote of thanks was proposed by Sri K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar, M.L.C. and the meeting came to a close.

There was Bhajan for nearly an hour after the meeting in the Math main hall by the Ramakrishna Math Bhajan Party led by Swami Priyananda.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, VISAKHAPATNAM.

Report for the year 1964-65.

The Ashrama has a Shrine where daily worship is conducted. There is a free Reading Room and Library, a Cultural and Recreation Centre for children and a Primary School.

The Library had 2,343 books. The Reading Room received 20 magazines and 6 newspapers. The Cultural Centre provides indoor and outdoor games for children and conducts film shows imparting audiovisual education. There is also a Children's Library consisting mostly of illustrated books in the centre.

The Primary School had a total strength of 359 children on the roll during the year.

The Managing Committee conveys its grateful thanks to one and all who have helped in cash or kind or by rendering service in various ways.

THE RAMAKRISHNA ADVAITA ASHRAMA, VARANASI

VIVEKANANDA SANSKRIT SEMINAR

An all-Sanskrit function as part of the programme of the 104th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda organised by the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Varanasi, was held at the Ashrama on the 15th and 16th of January 1966 under the Presidentship of Shri S. N. M. Tripathi, Vice-Chancellor, Sanskrit University, Varanasi, and Shri Justice N. H. Bhagawati, Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, respectively.

The main part of the programme was Essay and Elocution Contests in Sanskrit. The subject was "Vedanta Dharma Pratisthata Yugacharya Vivekananda". The contestants numbered 47, all being Sanskrit scholarship students from colleges and universities of Varanasi, both boys and girls (25 for Essay and 22 for speech competition). The function on both the days began with Vedic chantings.

Welcoming the gathering Swami Apurvananda, President of the Ashrama introduced the subject. The Swami further said that Sanskrit was the medium of Vedanta which was a treasure and an integrating force. It was only by cultivating Sanskrit extensively that India could preserve her national solidarity, ancient wisdom, knowledge, tradition and heritage.

The Seminar was inaugurated by Kashi Naresh Maharaja Vibhuti Narayan Singh Bahadur and gave away the prizes to all the essay contestants.

In his presidential speech on the 15th, Vice-Chancellor Pt. Tripathi said that Swami Vivekananda was a great lover of Sanskrit and according to the Swami the future regeneration and resurgence of India greatly depended on the study and spread of Sanskrit. Vedanta which Swamiji lived and preached in his life has brought a new light and hope for the whole world at this critical juncture of world civilization.

Justice Sri N. H. Bhagawati in his presidential speech on the 16th said: 'Swami Vivekananda was the beacon light of India. He revived the prestige of Sanatan Vedic religion and brought India to the fore-front. He was a living spirit of Vedanta Dharma basing it on the essential truth of Vedanta namely "All this is verily Brahman".

Justice Bhagawati then gave away the prizes to the speech contestants.

The Seminar was addressed by renowned Sanskrit scholars including Pt. Baldeo Upadhyaya, Director of Sanskrit Studies, V.S.U., Mimamsa Ratna. Pt. Subrahmaniya Sastri of B.H.U. Dr N. N. Choudhury, U.G.C. Prof B.H.U., Pt. V. S. Ramchandra Sastri, Principal, Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, B.H.U.

A vote of thanks in the form of a poem was proposed by Pt. T. S. Bhandarkar, Sahitya Ratna.

The hundred and thirtyfirst Birthday Tithipuja of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna falls on Tuesday, February 22, 1966

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SRIMAT SWAMI VIRESWARANANDAJI MAHARAJ
The new President of the Ramakrishna Math & Mission

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚI

CHAPTER II

सतो विवेचितास्वप्सु तन्मिथ्यात्वे च वासिते। भूमिर्दशांशतो न्यूना कल्पिताप्स्विति चिन्तयेत् ॥९३॥

Apsu, in water; *sataḥ*, from Reality; *vivecitāsu*, when discriminated; *tanmithyātvé ca*, and its illusoriness; *vāsite*, firmly taken root; *daśāṁśataḥ*, by ten parts; *nyūnā*, less; *bhūmiḥ*, earth; *apsu*, in water; *kalpitā*, projected; *iti*, in this way; *cintayet*, should be thought of.

93. When, by discrimination of water from Reality, the illusoriness of water firmly takes root in the mind then it should be understood that earth has been projected from water and occupies only a tenth part of it.

अस्ति भूस्तत्त्वशून्याऽस्यां शब्दस्पर्शौ सरूपकौ। रसश्च परतो गन्धो नैजः सत्ता विविच्यताम् ॥९४॥

Parataḥ, of others; *bhūḥ*, earth; *asti*, exists; *tatvaśūnyā*, by nature illusory; *asyāṁ*, in it (are); *sarūpakau*, with form; *śabdasparśau*, sound and touch; *rasaśca*, taste too; *gandhaḥ*, smell; *naijaḥ*, its own; *sattā*, reality; *vivicyatāṁ*, be separated.

94. Because of the continuity of the natures of the others (Reality and the elements) the earth is said to exist, to be illusory by nature, to be with form, sound, touch and taste, besides having its own quality of smell. Now, let Reality be separated from earth (by the process already stated).

पृथक्कृतायां सत्तायां भूमिर्मिथ्याऽवशिष्यते। भूमेर्दशांशतो न्यूनं ब्रह्माण्डं भूमिमध्यगम् ॥ ९५ ॥

Sattāyāṁ, Reality; *pṛtakkṛtāyāṁ*, separated; *bhūmiḥ*, earth; *mithyā*, illusory; *avaśiṣyaté*, remains; *bhūmeḥ*, of earth; *daśāṁśataḥ*, ten times; *nyūnaṁ*, less; *brahmāṇḍaṁ*, this universe; *bhūmi madhyagaṁ*, in the earth.

95. When the element of Reality in *earth* is separated what remains is illusoriness. When this unreality of the *earth* is grasped firmly by the mind, then

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it should be pondered over that this universe is projected from *earth* and that it occupies but one-tenth space of it.[1]

[1] It should be noted here that the earth, water, fire etc., spoken of in this context are the subtle forms of these elements and not the gross perceivable ones.

ब्रह्माण्डमध्ये तिष्ठन्ति भुवनानि चतुर्दश। भुवनेषु वसन्त्येषु प्राणिदेहा यथायथम् ॥ ९६ ॥

Brahmāṇḍamadhyé, in this universe; *caturdaśa*, fourteen; *bhuvanāni*, worlds; *tiṣṭhanti*, are established; *eṣu bhuvaneṣu*, in these worlds; *yathā yatham*, according to the condition of that world; *prāṇi dehāḥ*, bodies of beings; *vasanti*, live.

96. In this universe there are fourteen worlds and according to the situation and condition of each world there live different types of beings.

ब्रह्माण्डलोकदेहेषु सद्वस्तुनि पृथक्कृते। असन्तोऽण्डादयो भान्तु तद्भानेऽपीह का क्षतिः ॥ ९७ ॥

Brahmāṇḍalokadeheṣu, in the universe, the worlds and the bodies; *sadvastuni*, the Reality (Brahman); *pṛthakkṛte*, when separated; *aṇḍādayaḥ*, the universe etc.; *asantaḥ*, (as) unreal; *bhāntu*, let them appear; *tadbhāné api*, even though the world etc. appear as real; *iha*, here (in the case of Advaita); *kā*, what; *kṣatiḥ*, harm?

97. When from the universe, the worlds and bodies, Reality (Brahman) is separated then let it be known that these, universe etc., are unreal. If, however, they appear as real, what harm can that appearance do to Advaita? *

* The appearance of a thing does not affect the underlying reality — that is being conveyed here.

भूतभौतिकमायानामसत्त्वेऽत्यन्तवासिते। सद्वस्त्वद्वैतमित्येषा धीर्विपर्येति न क्वचित् ॥ ९८ ॥

Bhūtabhautikamāyānāṁ, of the elements, the worlds etc., and *māyā*; *asatvé*, unreality; *atyantvāsité*, firmly established in the mind; *sadvastu*, Reality; *advaitaṁ*, is without a second; *eṣā*, this; *dhī*, concept; *na kvacit*, never; *viparyeti*, reverts.

98. When by meditation and practice the unreality of the elements, the worlds and *māyā*, are firmly established in the mind then one comes to know that Reality (or Brahman) is without a second. Then the mind does not revert to the concept of duality.

DOUBT: If the earth and everything else are unreal there should be no action by a man of knowledge. That is being answered in the next sloka.

सदद्वैतात् पृथग्भूते द्वैते भूम्यादिरूपिणि। तत्तदर्थक्रिया लोके यथा दृष्टा तथैव सा ॥ ९९ ॥

Sadadvaitāt, from the Reality which is without a second; *pṛthagbhūte*, different; *bhūmyādirūpiṇi*, of the earth and the like which have forms; *dvaité*, in duality; *tattadarthakriyā*, their respective practices and uses; *loké*, in the world; *yathā*, in what way; *dṛṣṭā*, were seen; *tathaiva*, in that same way; *sā*, that (practices and uses); (*bhavati*, is).

99. Earth and the like which have forms and are different from Brahman, which is the Reality without a second, are experienced in quite the same way (by a man of realization) in the world of duality as he had experienced them before such knowledge, realization.

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HOW TO CALL ON GOD

A FEELING of non-response, insufficient response, or response not commensurate with one's efforts oppresses every aspirant some time or other, for a shorter or longer duration in the course of his spiritual life. This is sometimes called the 'dark night' of the soul. This happens to be the crucial point in the spiritual career of man. Doubts then arise as to whether he really has chosen the right track; whether after all God and visions and things like that could not have been chimerical, illusory, without any substance, induced by fasting and the resultant metabolic process — a fevered brain — or by drugs, as some of the present day psycho-analysts persistently argue and want to prove. In some this doubting condition happens to be a passing phase but in some others it has a severe reaction. They give up their efforts and turn away from religion, nay may turn quite antagonistic to it.

Why does this happen? Let us analyze. What does man expect from religion, from being spiritual? If we send a depth-charge, of thought, into the motives that move man to any activity we will be able to explode the fact that desire for freedom and happiness lies at the root of all activity. Each one, however, thinks that happiness will be his if he obtained but a particular object, attained a particular goal. Thence arise all his efforts to possess the object or reach the goal. But it is not always a pleasant experience that awaits him on acquiring what he longs for. He finds that the object falls short of his ideal or what his imagination conjured it up to be; the goal seems to be paltry when it is neared and happiness seems to be as far off as ever, freedom appears to be as distant as when he started. Failing to attain anything nearest to freedom in the outside world some one directed his thought inward and cutting off all attractions realized that happiness and freedom lay in his own Self, which is the Spirit. We hear of it from the records left to us by these sages and are attracted towards it. The picture that is painted of the man of realization is glorious, almost alluring. Lured by this pen-picture some either after or before seeking happiness in other directions come to religion; religion not as the common man understands it, i.e. as a denomination, a sect, a community, a belief in certain creeds and dogmas and nothing more, but something which speaks of a higher entity which is not bound by these labels.

However, prone as he is to sloth, expectant as he is of easy success, man meets with a hard taskmaster here, in religion. So the efforts which he himself considers as Herculean do not enable him to make any headway in spiritual life. The reasons are not far to seek. First of all, there is a tendency in man to overvalue his efforts. Even the laziest will find it a great burden and an unheard of attempt if he were asked to shift himself from one position to another.

Secondly, behind the efforts, there is not that real sincerity of purpose. We do not say that every one begins that way but there is every likelihood of man's losing the grit with which he started. To sustain the enthusiasm with which one starts any enterprise, even in the face of mountain high obstacles and impediments is a matter that few hearts are capable of. It is more so when the result is not tangible, not what can be perceived by the senses. Many get bogged down in their very first attempt and thenceforwards do not even try to extricate themselves from the situation.

Thirdly, the strong contrast that the religious life bears to the way of the world is an added reason. The two types are poles apart and there is no way of bridging them. It is this attempt to make a combination of these two paths, the *yoga* (spiritual) and *bhoga* (enjoyment), that makes a hash of spiritual life. Tulsidas, the famous poet-saint of North India, has said in a couplet of his, 'Where there is *kām* (desire) there cannot be Ram (God)

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and where Ram is there cannot be *kām* (desire).[1] This statement of Tulsidas appears almost like a paraphrase of the Upaniṣadic texts : 'When all desires, that are residing in the heart of man, are destroyed then the mortal becomes immortal and here and now enjoys the bliss of Brahman;'[2] and 'cut asunder are the knots of the heart, wiped away are all doubts, and destroyed are his *karmas* (the fruits of one's actions) when that Highest is seen.'[3] So it should be clear that it is a folly on the part of one who is in search of the ultimate good to combine these two paths.

II

Sages say that religion brings man eternal happiness and eternal freedom. Let us not mistake it as worldly happiness and freedom. A soul that has taken a body is bound and has to suffer pains. It is inevitable. True bliss, therefore, can only be in the non-temporal, transcendental Reality, which is the essence of man. Knowing this and being able to separate the Eternal Spirit from the body, with determination and courage, alone can make us joyful and liberated.[4] The path is narrow and dangerous and calls for extreme caution and perseverance. The goal cannot be purchased by wealth nor can it be bartered for any other worldly entity. 'Neither by work, nor by progeny, nor by wealth but by renunciation alone some one attained immortality,'[5] says the *Kaivalyopaniṣad*. 'Lust and lucre' as Sri Ramakrishna was never tired of repeating, is what stands in the way of man's attaining liberation. Renunciation of these is, therefore, incumbent on every practicant. It forms the keystone of the spiritual edifice.

We know how compellingly strong the attractions of the world are, how our mind is, as it were, soaked in them to the fullest extent; like a saturated solution it would not absorb anything more. This is specially the case of the present day youth. God has no place in their day's programme. We have to begin with such a mind. Of course, it would have been infinitely better to have a pure mind. But every one is not fortunate to possess an unsullied one. Again, purity of mind cannot be had for the asking, it requires cultivation, and purity cannot be cultivated by thinking more and more about the things of the world. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'As you move towards the east, the west will be left behind'. Likewise, when we move towards God the attractions of the world will loosen their grip on us. So this moving towards God is to be practised. We are apt to say : How can we with our sullied minds call on the Lord who is purity itself? To this there are counter questions. When will you begin then? How will you purify yourself? If we wait for all our impurities to be blown away before we start calling on God, we will be like the person who went to the sea to take a dip and waited for the waves to subside. Neither the waves subsided nor the person took his bath. So we have to begin the moment we feel that there is an entity which is eternal and can liberate us from our bonds. And in life the earlier we begin the better it is. For if we run in the old ruts for any length of time the furrows of habits will widen and run deeper and hold us down more and more firmly until at last we will sink into those habits altogether with no hope of redemption. As said earlier the two ways of life are diametrically opposed, so the farther you go on the worldly side the greater will have to be your exertion to retrace your steps. And man does not grow young always. Youth fades away yielding place to old age, when the faculties

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[1] जहाँ काम वहाँ राम नहीं ।
जहाँ राम वहाँ काम नहीं ॥

[2] यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥
Katha Up., 6. 14.

[3] भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥
Mundaka Up., 2. 2. 9.

[4] अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये सन्निविष्टः ।
तं स्वाच्छरीरात्प्रवृहेन्मुञ्जादिवेषीकां धैर्येण ।
तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतं ॥ *Kathopanishad*, VI. 17.

[5] न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः ।
Kaivalyopanishad, 1.3.

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reach a moribund state. At that stage one cannot take to a new line of action, cannot strike out on a new path. Man is willy nilly driven along by the momentum of his old habits. All of us know how strong habits are ; they are almost impossible to break through. Therefore, before they grow into our nature we have to discriminate and discard them when they are found to be a drag, a useless burden. A start along this higher path should somehow be done and then it is to be adhered to with utmost tenacity ; then results will come. But results or no results the practicant should be undauntedly striving towards the goal without let or hindrance.

III

People call on God for various reasons. Some want wealth, some progeny, some help to tide over physical difficulties or mental worries. But few want Him for His own sake. That is what Sri Krishna declares in the *Gita*, 'Four types of people, who are of good merits O Arjuna, worship Me : those who are in difficulty, those who are eager to know, those who are in need of something and the man of knowledge. Among them the man of knowledge being always united with Me and of one-pointed devotion excels. I am very dear to him and he is very dear to Me.'[6] Undoubtedly those who take the name of God, believe in His existence and call upon Him are people with meritorious deeds to their credit but the man who does not know anything but God is the most loved by Him. Why ? Because the first and the third type want to use God to their own ends. The second class simply wants to know about His Existence but the last class of devotees need Him for His own sake, and want Him as they need their very life breath. Those who reach such a state really worship God, others are only playing at it.

There is a dictum in Sanskrit, which forcefully brings out the idea of the above statement of Sri Krishna. 'Becoming like God one should worship Him.'[7] When one's mind becomes as pure as purity itself then one's worship can be said to be worth the name. Such being the case we should ask ourselves as to what right we have to complain that we have not been able to achieve anything, that God has been cruel and so on.

The point now is how to purify this sullied mind. It is by trying to remember God, calling on Him always. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'Hold on to the feet of God with one hand and do your work in the world with the other and when you are free from your duties hold on to Him with both your hands'. This is an injunction to remember Him always, even amidst our duties. Does not Sri Krishna similarly enjoin on Arjuna, 'remember Me at all times and fight' ?[8]

This world is a battle-field where each one has to fight his own battle of life. As another man's taking food does not nourish us, so too another's struggle and efforts do not benefit us spiritually. It may be asked, 'What then about the vicarious suffering ?' How many can do that ? Only Incarnations of God and their apostles are able to do it. And the Incarnations come once in a while. Even then how many really come in contact with such personalities, how many really take shelter at their feet ? Sri Krishna says, 'People, who are dull-witted, without knowing Me as the Lord of all creatures think little of Me who have taken this human form'.[9] True, very few are able to recognize an Incarnation when he lives with us in the human form. We do not have that divine sight, we do not have that purity of the mind which reveals things as they really are. Under such circumstances we have to struggle and work out our own way out of this labyrinth. Incessant practice of the

[6] चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ।
तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एक भक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ।
Gita, 7, 16-17.

[7] देवो भूत्वा देवं यजेत् ।

[8] तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युद्ध्य च । *Gita*, 8-7.

[9] अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् । *Gita*, 9-11.

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spiritual disciplines along with a constant remembrance of God is the only method by which we can overcome our drawbacks.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Establish some relation with God: of a servant, of a child, of a friend, whichever suits your temperament. Make Him your own.' How much does not a mother love her children! The mother sacrifices her sleep and food to attend to the child when it is ailing, she takes infinite pains to attend to the smallest needs or comforts of her children. We have friends, real and good, whom we long to see; whose presence gives us joy. Again, a servant, true and faithful, will not mind even harsh words or treatment of his master. For he knows that at heart his master can have no ill-will towards him, as such he continues to discharge his duties as if nothing had happened between them. In a word his fidelity to his master remains constant and unshakable. By that the servant wins over his master's gratitude and grace. These are some of the human relationships which can be daily met with in our life. What is required of us is to cultivate one of these attitudes towards God. We can think of Him, as Sri Ramakrishna commended, as the Master and ourselves as His servants. For the Divine Master, who has planted compassion in the hearts of all beings, can He be less merciful? The human master may err but not the Divine. Sri Krishna assures that to us, 'Even the most wicked person, if he with one-pointed devotion, thinks of Me, should be considered as a person of exemplary character for he has rightly resolved. He is soon transformed into a righteous person and obtains eternal peace. Know it for certain, O son of Kunti, My devotee never perishes.'[10]

IV

We are not forlorn as long as we remember that there is One who has brought us into this world and who residing in us looks after our welfare. Perhaps, we may be afraid that he is watching us when we go wrong. That sense of fear also is good. For it will put a curb on our evil propensities, and help us cleanse our minds. In fact nothing escapes His perception, nothing is beyond His purview. He is the Indwelling Spirit in every one of us. How then can anything remain unknown to Him? Should we then tremble and fall down and weep and wail fearing the wrath of God? Of course, we must be ready to reap the fruits of our actions, good or evil. But weeping and wailing does not help if we do not mend our life. God like a loving mother forgives our faults and makes us strong to bear the burden of our actions, when it falls on us. He sees to it that we do not miserably sink down into despair. That is the result of calling on God. We shall be steadfast to Him, even though it means passing through fire and sword. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that we can see God if we call on Him with earnestness, with a yearning heart. He was wont to sing a song expressive of this thought.

> Cry to your Mother Śyama with a real cry, O Mind!
> And how can She hold Herself from you?
> How can Śyama stay away?
> How can your Mother Kali hold Herself away?

Again, he said, 'God reveals Himself to a devotee who feels drawn to Him by the combined force of these three attractions: the attraction of worldly possessions to the worldly man, the child's attraction for its mother, and the husband's attraction for the chaste wife.' When we reach this state we can be said to be really calling on God, nay living in Him. In the words of Sri Ramakrishna, again, 'Longing is like the rosy dawn. After the dawn out comes the sun. Longing is followed by the vision of God.' But to have that longing is not a matter of a few years of discipline, it is a lifelong struggle. The path is long and arduous but a brave heart will never quail.

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[10] अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक्।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ।
क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ।
Gita, 9. 30-31.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

BIHARIBABU : 'I have another question to ask. Scriptures say, "Inside the *jīva* sits the Lord". What does it mean?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'You know, it is just a sort of expression. Really there is no language to express His existence anywhere. The fact that He is not non-existence is somehow to be brought to man's mind. So various improvisations in language have been made, but what is beyond thought cannot be expressed in language. Hence all this inevitable vagueness is there.

'Now, for instance, it is admitted by all that He is omnipresent. If this is a fact how can you talk of inside and outside, of up and down, of east and west? He is everywhere, He saturates everything, you cannot put your finger anywhere and say He is not there. He is covering everything but does not accept any limitation, He is not exhausted anywhere. When you use the word "Brahman" you will have to use it in this sense. And yet it is not properly explained. (For, two things cannot occupy at the same time even one point what to speak of covering the entire universe, manifest and unmanifest. If He is one thing and all these things of the world are other things it comes to two things occupying the same space at the same time, which is impossible.) And yet we are to say something of Him. So we say He covers everything and He transcends them all too. Master used to say this. He would say this too : "All things have been polluted, having come out of the mouth (by way of expression); Brahman alone has not been sullied, for It could not be expressed in words or signs".'

Biharibabu : 'You are all wonderful people, Maharaj. You would not say anything positive and keep most things vague — with the aid of formidable negatives you would not cease expressing Brahman.'

The author : 'Leave aside other's expressions. What you have yourselves understood — we want to know that. Surely you have understood something, otherwise why would you be saying so many things?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'You know, one may understand Brahman but one cannot give expression to one's feeling. To express one's feeling one is to take recourse to language, but language fails to express Him. So far human language has been found to be inadequate to express Him. Master ruefully said, "My boys, I try my best to reveal everything to you; but Mother presses my lips down and would not allow me to express It". Well, you speak words every day by thousands. Have you thought from where they arise?'

The author : 'Why, from mind.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Where in mind? How they are there? And where is the mind itself?'

Biharibabu : 'There is a nervous connexion between the brain and the tongue. The mind then must be there.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'How is the mind residing there, Biharibabu?'

Biharibabu : 'In the form of vibrations.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Let us take it for granted. Tell me if that vibration is everlasting or it stops and starts again.'

Biharibabu : (*A little surprised*) 'I have not thought over the matter, Maharaj.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Please think over it.'

Biharibabu : 'Perhaps it stops and restarts again. It excites the brain through the nerve and brings out the reply.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'If you say it stops then how does the second vibration rise, when nothing from the external world acts on it?'

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Biharibabu : 'No, Maharaj, we have not thought over the matter.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'So you see you can express upto a point ; beyond that you cannot.'

Biharibabu then told the present author, 'What else can we ask beyond this ?' So both of us bowed down to Maharaj and took leave of him. Standing in front of his carriage, Biharibabu said, 'I have not heard such words before. This illiterate *sādhu* has thought over even such things, solved even such problems. Really, how strange is this ! We take pride in our education. But in his presence that pride has to vanish. In reality he is more educated than we are. Who can question it ?'

One day in the middle of 1905 Lātu Maharaj took it into his head to go to a devotee's house. So he took Nivāran along with him. It was raining very heavily. There was more than knee-deep water on the streets. Lātu Maharaj had to pull up his wearing cloth upto his thighs. Wading through the waters on the street and thoroughly drenched he reached the house ; and with the dripping clothes on he went to the temple where the host used to worship and bowed down to the Lord there. Then only did he change his cloth. When all were seated comfortably a devotee asked, 'Why, Maharaj, have you taken so much trouble to come here today ? You could have done it any other day'.

Lātu Maharaj : 'You know, Master used to say, "In this *Kali yuga* to observe truthfulness is the austerity. One who is not truthful cannot tread the path of piety." One day he casually said, he would not take *luchi*. That day the main item was *luchi*. He had to allay his hunger with sweets only.'

The devotee : 'Does truthfulness consist in keeping one's expressed words ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Of course not. To observe truthfulness means so many things. Don't think to act up to one's expressed words is all of truthfulness. It really means keeping one's resolve. That resolve, may be expressed in words, may be kept in mind ; and it may as well find expression in work leading ultimately to the fulfilment of the resolve but never expressed in words.'

The devotee : 'What is resolve, again, Maharaj ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Wish or desire ; what else ? A little intense.'

The devotee : 'There are good and bad desires. Are we supposed to carry out into action our bad desires too ? Will that amount to observing truthfulness ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'You do not know your minds, boys, as yet. What you are calling desires are not desires but whims. Do you know what is the real desire of a *jīva* ? To get bliss-abiding. That can be had by realizing *satchidānanda*, which is not an easy matter. To realize this desire for the real Truth is what we call truthfulness. They say, while in the mother's womb the *jīva* prays hard to get free of that stage and promises to call on Him when he sees the light of day. But after being born he forgets the promise — this is to be regretted. Of all kinds of power will-power is the greatest. When this power becomes active one grows to be a tremendous worker. Nobody can stand against that. So don't mistake a whim for will. Man, of course, does work under the influence of whims. But such works have no abiding value ; and one who is moved by whims makes no spiritual progress. To follow such whims is not observance of truth.'

The devotee : 'I fail to understand one thing. When all our day-to-day activities are born of our will, why trace their genesis to whims ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Look here, if you change your life's aim from hour to hour what would you call that ? You know that parable of our Master. A man wanted to dig a well. He started at one place. He met with some obstruction. He left that place and started digging at another place. There was obstacle. He left that place too. In that way he went on changing places — no well was dug. Similar is the case with most of our lives. But the person who, in spite of all obstacles and obstructions, stuck to one place and went on digging, got water. Similarly when a man sticks to one ideal and works for it he gets tremendous will-power and realizes the ideal.

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One who continually changes his ideal is led by temporary whims, his ideals are not real and not properly thought about. Therefore it is that he loses interest in them after some time. These ideals are false. Have an understanding of the real ideal and having known it stick to it under all circumstances and work for its realization. This is what is known as observance of truth, not merely keeping one's words. This Truth is God's power, God Himself. In that power, man, whether he knows it or not, abides. He who knows it and follows it will get it. This is the only path to the realization of Truth that is God.'

The devotee : 'Why so, Maharaj ? There are so many other paths, e.g., those of *jñāna, yoga,* and *bhakti* — knowledge or discrimination, mysticism, and devotion. And you say to follow truth is the only path. What is this ?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'The paths that you just mentioned are for realizing the truth. If you deviate from truth and follow any or all the paths will you get at truth ? You will not make any progress, far less reach the truth.'

After such talks for a long time he took *prasada* in the temple. Having tasted it Lātu Maharaj told the devotee : 'The Deity's eyes must have fallen on this food, it is really consecrated. Otherwise it could not have been so tasty, which it wonderfully is. Just see there is no salt, no spices and we do not like such food, our taste has become so perverted. But this food, without salt and spices, is surprisingly delicious. It cannot but be due to the deity's graciously casting His eyes on it. (The Hindu deities, it is said, do not partake of food as we mortals do. A ray of light comes from their eyes and falls on the food and drink placed for offering. That is how they accept the offerings.) This shows that the image of the deity here is no longer a material image. Lord's grace has descended on it ; it is living. And He has actually accepted the food offered, hence it is so tasty'.

Three devotees who used to mix with Lātu Maharaj, rather intimately, passed away in 1905. Nivāran Chandra Datta was one of them. Lātu Maharaj was extremely free with Nivāranbabu. When Lātu Maharaj left Alambazar Math and lived outside without any fixed place for his stay, it was Nivāranbabu who knew his whereabouts ; even Raja Maharaj would get news of Lātu Maharaj through him only. And when his *gurubhais* were to send any news to him it was done through this Nivāranbabu alone. Lātu Maharaj loved him so much that he used to be invariably present in all the celebrations in Nivāranbabu's house. Nivāran used to compose songs on the Master and others and go to the Math and sing them before the *sādhus.* One day Lātu Maharaj asked him not to compose such songs, which, he said, would bring poverty to him. So, for some time, he did not compose songs. When Raja Maharaj heard it he did not like the imposition of restriction on Nivāran. It is said that when one day Raja Maharaj met Lātu Maharaj he asked him, "Is it a fact that you have prohibited Nivāran from composing songs on our Master and others ? He was preaching the Master's ideas to the public through these songs. Is it right to forbid him to do so ?" Lātu Maharaj relented and withdrew his prohibition not for his own satisfaction but to please Raja Maharaj. So Nivāran restarted composing songs which gladdened the hearts of the Math *sadhus.*

Nivāranbabu passed away in September, 1905. The same year Haramohan also passed away. This gave Lātu Maharaj a little shock. He said in grief, 'All the other devotees of the Master who were poor have seen better days since the passing away of the Master. Haramohan remained the only exception. He has passed away in poverty but I say his children will not remain poor. Lakshmi will smile on them.' It turned out to be a fact.

Within a month of Haramohan's death Dānakāli, a devotee of the Master, passed away. In this connexion Lātu Maharaj once told the present author, 'One day Master told Dāna, "Express your heart's desire, it shall be fulfilled". He did not ask for anything. At Master's insistence he said, "Then kindly do this : On the last day (of my life) you will come yourself and take me to the destination by hand."' When Dāna passed away Lātu Maharaj was not present there ; but he heard

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it from Baburam Maharaj who was present in person. Baburam Maharaj said, '"Really it happened. Master did come at the last moment, caught hold of Dāna's hand and led him away." Brother Baburam saw it with his eyes wide open. Whatever Master said about anyone is all coming out to be true.'

1906. One day a devotee turned extremely cheeky to Lātu Maharaj. What happened to him that day we do not know. At that Lātu Maharaj told him, 'Look here, boy, you should not show disrespect to a *sādhu*, you must be gentle and modest to him.' Still the young man persisted in his effrontery, and said, 'Swamiji, (Swami Vivekananda) used to say "I feel like whipping one who always repeats to himself 'I am a slave', 'I am a non-entity'; for a slave, a non-entity he does become. I cannot stand this attitude. And the rogue who makes no distinction of superiority or inferiority and mixes with me on equal terms I call him a man, I feel like embracing him".' Lātu Maharaj said again, 'Give up this cheekiness. I know, how much vigour, and fire you have.' The gentleman still persisted in his wrong way and said, "What do you say, Maharaj? We have no fire in us! We are children of Immortality; wind cannot move us, fire cannot burn us, water cannot drench us,...." He went on thus. Lātu Maharaj became serious and said, 'This sort of cheekiness we cannot bear with at all times.' The next moment when the devotee was about to speak in the same strain Lātu Maharaj cried out, 'Stop this nonsense,' and started in his wonted way muttering almost inaudibly. At this the devotee laughed out loudly and said, 'Maharaj, whom are you scolding?' Lātu Maharaj: 'With so much scolding you are still laughing! I have never seen a shameless fellow like you.'

The young man: 'You have not scolded me, you have taken yourself to task. Who will not laugh at that?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Donning ochre-coloured cloth, you fool, you think yourself to be a great *sādhu*. You cannot bear with a little harsh word; in anger you hiss like a snake even now. O the greatness of a *sādhu*! Wearing this red cloth, you think you have made others your bond slaves — is it? A *sādhu* scolding a man! Just look at the enormity of it.' Thus he muttered almost within himself.

The young man: 'So you are punishing yourself.'

Lātu Maharaj did not give any reply to it. We have seen it many times in his life — this taking himself to task, so that no trace of egoism can ever come to him. It was not only observed on occasions like this, but even when he gave instructions, earnestly sought by any one, he was seen to use similar expressions of reproach on himself. He was heard upbraiding himself thus: 'Fool, what greatness have you attained yourself that you go out to instruct others? You vagabond, you to instruct them! They are far superior to you, far more educated than you. How dare you speak with them?' With such words he would try to keep his mind absolutely unsullied by egotism.

One day as he was carrying on in this strain the present author asked him, 'Why is it, Maharaj, you are often seen to mutter like this?' At this he said, 'You don't know, this human mind is a rogue of the first magnitude. It is always prone to get twisted in the wrong way. So it needs hard counter-twisting every now and then.' And he showed with his hands how to counter-twist a rope.

The author: 'To feed the mind with the opposites of whatever rise in it — is that the path of discrimination?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Yes, that is one path of discrimination — to go on revolving in mind the opposite of what comes into it. When one is well practised in this his mind reaches a stage when this opposite-thinking becomes natural and automatic — when anger comes its opposite forgiveness supplants it; greed is supplanted by charity, sex urge by love of God, cruelty by non-injury. If you can continue this practice for some time your mind calms down of itself.'

It was perhaps in the same year (1906) that one day Lātu Maharaj went with Swami Śuddhananda to the Arya Mission, to hear the peculiar interpretation of the *Gita* by its

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founder. He used to explain the *Gītā* as an allegory. Hearing his interpretation, Lātu Maharaj said to Śuddhananda, 'His interpretation is emblemic.' A disciple of Sri (Pañchānan) Bhattāchayra heard it and looking at Lātu Maharaj's dress, his manner of talking, etc. remarked, "cracked". Lātu Maharaj did not know the meaning of the English word but he guessed it. When he and Śuddhananda were on the road he asked, "Well, Sudhir, what is the meaning of the word 'cracked'? It means a mad-cap—isn't it?"

At this time Lātu Maharaj really appeared queer — his dress, talks, behaviour, all indicated an extremely whimsical, bizarre nature. It is difficult to find reasons for this. Master used to say, 'When a man knows Brahman he appears to others in four ways: like a child, like an inert thing, like a mad-cap, and like an unclean hobgoblin. Sometimes he is like a five-year old child having no attachment for anything, no sense of shame, propriety etc. Sometimes he behaves like a mad man. Sometimes he remains inert like a log of wood. In this stage he cannot undertake any work. All activities cease for him.' It has been mentioned before that for about two years and a half Lātu Maharaj remained inert and dazed; and then sometime as a child, playing and cutting jokes with children. The bad name of being whimsical stuck to him throughout his life. But we have never seen him unclean like a demon at any time.

(*To be continued*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Q. *How can we intensify our spiritual life even when we are engaged in work?*

Ans. By intense longing for God. If you want God seriously, you must have intense yearning. Sometimes we profess that we love God, but actually we do not. In that case also we may pray to God. If we pray with intense desire for realization, God Himself will fulfil it. If you are sincere, God must hear it. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'You must also pray and pray sincerely.' Devotion must be sincere. If you are really sincere, God must listen to you.

Q. *When I go to a holy place or am in the company of holy men, I find a kind of religious fervour. But after that it vanishes, and I feel I become worldly.*

Ans. The atmosphere you feel here at a holy place should be with you wherever you go. Our mind must be filled with devotion. Some part of it must be devoted to the thought of God. That intense longing for God must be there. The trouble with us is that we occupy the whole of our mind with worldly things. You can keep the vision of God if you really love God sincerely. We must inwardly feel that we are devotees of God. We must keep the idea of God-vision bright before us. We must devote part of our mind to the contemplation of God. Then everything will become easy. We do not have the vision of God because our allegiance to that ideal is not very deep. We are like ordinary mirrors, catching the reflection but not retaining it. It comes through intense longing for God and earnest endeavour for realization. Because you are a devotee you should also prove by your action that you are a devotee. Sri Ramakrishna once told M. about spiritual truth. In reply M. said, 'Yes, I know'. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'No, you must assimilate it so that your life may become transformed'.

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Q. *What is God's grace? How to get that grace?*

Ans. You should do your part and then think of God's grace. He is at your beck and call. But He wants to see whether a particular devotee is anxious to have Him or not, just as a man under water longs for a little breath of air. If you love God, and advance one step towards Him, He takes ten steps towards us. So it does not take any time. Only He wants to see that He does not reveal Himself to unworthy persons. Let us show by our conduct that we really crave for God.

Q. *As soon as we sit for meditation, our mind wanders. How to remedy it?*

Ans. That is a very common problem. Meditation is really a difficult thing. Japa, repetition of the Lord's name, is much easier. You should watch the mind when it wanders, and bring it back to the Ideal. Let the mind wander a little and you watch it. It will become controlled. It may take a whole lifetime or may require life after life. But don't be afraid. Be ready to sacrifice the whole life or even life after life. There is no possession equal to God-realization. Therefore struggle on and on till you attain your goal.

Q. *Is initiation necessary, and does it help one?*

Ans. Certainly it helps if one has faith in the Mantra one receives and believes in God's omnipotence. With that firm belief if you go on, you will get peace.

Japa had better be accompanied with meditation. Whenever we utter a name, a picture also is presented to our mind. That is the ingredient of Dhyana (meditation). That picture will become more and more bright. After a deep meditation, one feels refreshed. Some have extremely outward tendencies, and so they have to wait.

Q. *How about the four Yogas?*

Ans. Raja-Yoga is a particular kind of practice that should never be undertaken except under the direct guidance of an adept. Bhakti Yoga is easier if you believe in God. Jnana-Yoga is extremely difficult. Karma-Yoga is doing work for work's sake—unselfish work. For those who have no belief in God, Karma-Yoga is most suitable.

Q. *Is emotionalism good or bad?*

Ans. Emotionalism is excessive display of emotion, which should certainly be controlled. Emotion itself is not bad. It is also part of the mind. But too much of it is bad.

Sri Ramakrishna's example about this is very impressive — if a little milk is boiled too much, nothing is left of it in the cauldron.

Q. *Are rituals essential to acquire Bhakti?*

Ans. They are a part of Bhakti. Otherwise it means he does not have faith in God.

Q. *Some of our Puranas say that a particular God is supreme, and others another God, and so on?*

Ans. That depends upon the devotee, to which aspect of God he is attached. God is one. He appears in different forms to different devotees according to their temperament and capacity. The Puranas are meant to suit these different types of devotees.

Love, truth and unselfishness are not merely moral figures of speech, but they form our highest ideal, because in them lies such a manifestation of power. ... All outgoing energy following a selfish motive is frittered away; it will not cause power to return to you; but if restrained, it will result in development of power.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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VEDANTA

K. C. VARADACHARI

It must perforce be evident to almost all scholars that no one may be able to add anything to what has been so well spoken about on Vedanta upto now. It has been the life-breath of religion and philosophy in this country for countless years. However it seems that in the opinion of this Congress it is a perennial subject for reiteration and refreshment rather than for exposition of novelties likely to be discovered in the system. That being so, I venture to ask myself what is Vedanta and which is the Vedanta?

Vedanta for most has been identified with the Advaita-vada of Śri Śankaracharya, obviously because it is the most effective philosophy and dogma that teaches us to give up the diversity and betake ourselves to the One Ultimate Reality, knowing which one can know all. Its direct appeal to the mind yearning for liberation has been immense despite its call for renunciation of the world and its lures and with it its sorrows.

There have been other eminent thinkers and theologians who saw in the Upaniṣads not merely a philosophical absolute monism, but also a religious Godhead (monotheism), validly discovered through the selfsame *pramāṇa*, the Śabda. The necessity to resolve a dualism between monism and monotheism was foreseen. A question arises: Was this dualism only a result of the *pramāṇa* usage—reason *vs* revelation? This was not so. Both were revelational, Vedic. Therefore, some of these scholars rejected the monistic texts and claimed a dualistic tradition for the texts. A different set of theologians following the Upaniṣads discovered that there are texts which synthesized the identity or monistic texts and the dualistic texts (called difference-texts), and these are the most significant if we have to accept the whole literature of the Veda as the highest authority for proving the existence and nature of the Highest Brahman. Undoubtedly all accepted the name Śārīraka for the Vedānta (sūtra) śāstra, though it is Viśiṣṭādvaita alone that emphasized the Śarīrī (Self-nature) of Brahman, the Ultimate One and God as such.

There have been other schools trying to mediate between the two extreme positions adopted by Śri Śankara and Śri Madhva, who were not fully prepared to accept the Rāmānuja-solution of Śarīrā-Śarīri-bhāva theory of *Samanvaya* of all texts.

The Organismic Theory propounded by Viśiṣṭādvaita establishes the monistic as well as the monotheistic whilst yet retaining the excellences of mystical devotion and experience of dualism. Broadly speaking I wish to approach the whole subject from a very old but unused standpoint. I refer to the threefold classification and analysis that we meet with in the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavad Gītā* as well.

I refer to the three-fold classification and analysis that goes by the name *adhi-daiva, adhyātma* and *adhibhūta* aspects. These form a trinity, a triplicity if you please, of the study of any great spiritual literature. These three will have to be considered. These three grant us knowledge of the essence-aspect of the whole of Reality as considered from (1) the speculum of the Divine, (2) from the speculum of psychology of the individual soul, and (3) from the speculum of Nature. The conception of a three-fold reality reveals three levels also, though it perhaps would be necessary to think of them as not equal to one another. For a science of Nature the external world would be important, though this is surely of secondary importance to man from his own psychological standpoint, which is inner. Above both nature and man is the Eternal or the Luminous Reality. The Veda speaks of three worlds in integration, the *Svar*, (divine), the *antar* (human or inner), and

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Bhūh (outer) ; though in terms of Nature *Svar* is said to be the sky, *antar* as mid-air (*antarikṣa*), and *bhūh* (the earth or pṛthvī).

In respect of the analysis of Nature we have to take into account the three approaches: on the lines of science, on the lines of psychology and on the lines of transcendental vision. In Vedanta we seek to view Nature itself from the standpoint of the Ultimate Brahman or Revelation. As Spinoza would say, it is the speculum of eternity that makes one regard Nature itself as an attribute of God, and identical with that supreme essence. For example, this expression is identical with the Upaniṣadic standpoint which affirms without qualification: *Sarvam khalu Idam Brahma*: All this verily is Brahman. Surely this vision of Nature is different from what one perceives through the individual's psychological vision, for Nature is a constant passing away and an illusory phenomenon when it appears to be permanent and indeed we know how the permanence has been shown to be an illusion by Bergson and the Buddhists, whereas impermanence or change has been shown to be an illusion by the Māyāvādins.

Though reality could be envisioned from the standpoint of Nature, of time, space, and causation, it would show multiplicity ; yet it has been possible to apprehend that this multiplicity is seeking interrelationships however external (?) in order to reveal a system of interconnected individuals and particulars, through some superior or divine principle— a principle of integration or organic homism.

The *adhibhūta* conception of reality is a pluralistic conception where division is predominantly active in every direction, but a pluralism that seems to be stemming out of an integrating Oneness — called the Divine Force — and working under the direction of a supreme Godhead. Science may be aware of laws only, not of a law-giver, but there is hardly any doubt that a transcendental Deity is the sole intelligence utilising subordinate intelligences, forcing them to do His cosmic as well as supracosmic and sub-cosmic work. It was a great intuitional philosopher (Bergson) who declared that it is not the unity that is seen as the goal of pluralistic expression but the identity of impulse pushing all towards a plurality that is also a unifying activity in the diverse. So far as Nature is concerned all processes seem to be imposed on it and spontaneously originating from it or within it. Hence the emphasis on God's existence and proof for it become paramount.

Roughly we can identify the *adhi-daiva* view to be that of Advaita, whereas the Viśiṣṭādvaita is the *adhyātma* view.

These three ways of looking at Reality even through the revelational *pramāṇa* of Vedanta may yield three different phases of the same Reality known as Brahman. Thus one may say that Reality as seen through creation or Nature is the Īśvara and His multiplicity-constituted world. Another may say that the One Divine is the Self and the whole universe including both the sentient and the insentient as constituting His body from the psychlogical pluralistic point of view adopted by the revelation, and the third kind of teachers may regard the Whole to be Brahman alone — the One Existent — *ekam eva*.

Attempts have not been wanting on the part of philosophers to reconcile these three revelational standpoints by *mīmāmsā* (revelational logic) and by *nyāya* (non-revelational logic). The equations of Nature with Self and of Self with God, may reveal a gradual enlargement of the principle of explanation of the lower or less vast by the larger or wider and more inclusive and comprehensive concept of Reality. Here we have an extension of the meaning of the word '*vyāpti*' which seems to be a cardinal principle of inferential reasoning.

Early enough it was discerned clearly that though explanation by God is an ideal explanation, yet it is through the psychic being or Self that any fruitful and intelligible explanation could be made. Not only would it be an intimate and human explanation, though not logical or intellectual, but it would be really capable of helping the individual to solve his pressing problem of liberation (*mokṣa*). Thus it is through the psychological procedure, through discipline of one's inner powers of meditation and steadiness and control of

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mental modifications, that one begins to understand the meaning and significance of the *adhyātma śāstra* and *antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa* of the Upaniṣads. God's experience as Self is the result of this devotion. This is an inner discovery and attainment, which leads to the inner step of the divine worlds above the terrestrial and the change. Man's inner destiny becomes fixed ; one goes beyond the world's mortality. This experience becomes central and imperative whatever kind of Vedanta one follows. The Kingdom of God is within and one's spiritual essence is one with Him.

The *Adhi-daiva* conception or perspective will reveal how the Vedanta Sūtras take up the question of the nature of Brahman or God. It emphasizes that from Brahman all things take their rise, in which they live and move and have their being and finally into whom all of them merge and so on. This fact it is impossible to prove by means of causal logic that operates in a way in the realm of sense (stimulus and response), or invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) of the inductive or deductive logic of the finite mind. The source or *pramāṇa* for this knowledge is undoubtedly the Śāstra (scriptural Vedic texts) ; (*Śāstrayonitvāt*). This is the given datum — given by the Divine (*adhi-daiva*), got through illumination or revelation and preserved scrupulously in the Veda. All other *pramāṇas* or sources of knowledge have to submit to this supreme infallible Veda in so far as supra-sensory knowledge is concerned. Of course the *śruti* has itself to be understood or construed by the principles of context, intention and purpose, beginning and conclusion (*tat-tu samanvayāt*).

Though this poses the problem of language and the necessity to take into account both the *yoga* (etymology) and *rūḍhi* (use, *loka-vyavahāra*) yet there are special problems of value, to be entertained. The hierarchy of values which dictate at higher levels also applies to the hierarchy of existence or sense of existence and realities. The meanings of these terms become significant in the context of psychic being and standards of existence and living in human societies. Thus the human being confronted by the transcendental reality discovers at once a communion that reveals a wide disparity between the human and the divine or rather finiteness and the infinite. Many theories have been propounded to explain the possibility of union between these widely disparate levels which is what is aimed at in Yoga, by stilling the movements of *manas* or *citta* and uniting it with the Ultimate. All Vedāntas accept that individual soul is perfect in essence but that it had a 'primordial' fall owing to beginningless ignorance (*karma-avidyā*) or Māyā. However it must be remembered that there are some passages which speak of two birds (*dvā-suparnau*) of which one is the Lord (Īśa) and the other is *anīśa* (not-lord but servant). It is the *ajña, anīśa* that eats the fruit whilst the *jña* and Īśa looks on. One has to attain the *jña*, Īśa and non-eater condition by looking up *or* seeing the Lord. This would evidently strike one as a Sāmkhyan passage which describes the Puruṣa who takes interest in Nature as *ajña, anīśa, aśakta* and suffers but contemplating on the Īśvara (of Yoga) *realizes jñāna, īśatva, śaktitva* and *vairāgya*.[1]

The Godhead is always perfect whereas the individual soul has to pass through the entire *prakṛtic-vikṛtic* processes, the descent or plunge into inconscience and ascent towards perfect divine consciousness and in the process manifest the infinite possibilities or potentialities of the *Prakṛti* that can become a vehicle of delight for the soul ascending towards knowledge (*jñāna*), power (*śakti*), lordship (*aiśvarya*) and renunciation of the lower for the higher self-knowledge or divine gnosis. Or else the whole process is bound to be what it had been shown to be, a vast meaningless play of delusion and self-delusion, Māyā in one word. But if Māyā means also *jñāna* and *Vayunam*, then it is knowledge of the vast Universe of God opened up to the individual soul or *puruṣa* which reveals God as both without and within it. The solitary being whose religion is something which he does with his solitariness as Whitehead said, may be content to go inward and

[1] My studies on *Samkhya Karika*.

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experiencing the dialectical frenzy of polar opposites in Nature — the *dvandvas*—, give up the effort to perceive *jñāna* in *ajñāna* or truth in falsehead—*poyninra jñāna*, as the Aḷvār Śaṭakopa stated —, and condemn all *prakṛtic* experience as undivine. But once the *adhi-daiva* view emerges then man feels that the Divine is as much outside as within, in *adhibhūta* as in *adhyātma*. It will be clear that Māyā may be a statement of fact, the brute fact of human misery, death, disease and so on, and to get out of it is absolutely necessary. To get out of it, by renouncing it is one way; whether one could do it before one has exhausted his pilgrimage of discovery or *anubhava* of Nature or Māyā is another question — for that getting out is likely to be also a Māyā.

Māyā in Vedanta has played the role of an explanation of the facts of contradiction or opposites curtailing each other. The co-existence and even dialectical frenzy of particular propositions claiming universality is logical Māyā, and a transcendence of these by a higher level experience of the Brahman is called for. It is not the synthesis of opposites or *i* and *o* propositions which is the Hegelian version that is being attempted, though this is about the most beautiful *līlā* or play of becoming, emergence of novelty and so on in our external world and within our organism, and everywhere. However the popular version of Māyā has been explained as a play for God and folly for man. This intriguing concept has come to stay to explain not so much the illusoriness of the world as to explain that man gets into illusions about the world, its promises of pleasure and power and jñāna and beauty turn into their opposites. It is this perplexity, this indeterminability or defeatism that prompts one towards escapism and pessimism. The whole problem is not that there are no identifications and illusions in the world of experience : they are indeed innumerable, but the contrary experiences are also available — that expectations of pain, disease, danger and poverty, hate and so on are also falsified in the world. This the poet has shown — not the poets of gloom but the poets of bloom. Māyā seems to present a problem of wonder, of miracle, of growth due to a higher order of being which interpenetrates and instigates the processes of the lower orders or our order of being. But for this Māyā, man would hardly think of any higher order of reality, nor for that matter would there be religion at all. No wonder the wonder of paradoxicality — a paradoxy which is above and beyond the orthodoxy and heterodoxy — is the doxy which combines opposite abstractions made by reason, making non-sense of sense and sense out of non-sense. Rightly perhaps we can see that there is none such.

Skilful analyses of this concept have discerned in it (i) power, (ii) knowledge, skill, (iii) ability, (iv) activity, karma or avidyā, (v) veiling capacity (or concentration that omits other than what one concentrates on,) (vi) wonder — perplexity — paradoxicality, (vii) unpredictability and so on. Conspicuous among these analysers have been the Māyāvadins (including the Yoga Vāśiṣṭa psychologists) and the refuters of the Māyāvāda who had claimed that it is reality whose polyphasic character is revealed, and it is Īśvara's power (*mama Māyā*, my power as Lord Kṛṣṇa said). It is a godly power that is taken to be ungodly or anti-godly. Therefore a correction was made by the critics of Māyāvāda (teachers of world-illusoriness) by posing that Māyā is verily the divine power, *shakti*, inherent in the Divine Absolute Principle. Thus in the Āgama Vedāntas this latter aspect is emphasized, and Śakti seems to be more fully appreciated as both Māyā and Īśvarī. However one great thinker of this *sampradāya*, Yāmunācarya has expressed that Māyā is the *yavanikā* or curtain that is the veil of Śakti (Śri), which creates charm and wonder.

In the Nigama Vedānta so to speak, the negative, human-relational and paradoxical nature of Māyā seems to have gained ground, and Śankara's great stress on the illusion and veiling (*adhyāsa*) as characteristic of Māyā is an expression of this. For Vedanta in its Nigama aspect has always enunciated this message of deliverance from Māyā, the paradoxicality, and illusion. Man can cross over

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misery ; rebirth and karma could be overcome. Man can pass from non-existence (*māyā*) to existence (*sat*), from darkness (*tamas*) to light (*jyoti*), and from mortality (changeableness) to immoratlity (*amṛtatvam*). This is by means of realizing that *Māyā* is not to be our main concern even if it be attainment of all skills (*siddhis*), for one must pass beyond it—for there is death or *kāla*, time, which reveals that all these are evanscent or moving towards non-existence. God, the transcendent, the Para, must be realized. There is at the back of this Māyā a supreme power of God who leads one beyond to the essence of existence or eternity. Existentialisms are indeed searching for that which makes existence existence. Such is the concept of Śrī ; in the Veda mantra Śrī Sūkta one could see how under the concept of Divine Mother the Divine leads one to that which transcends the *preyas*, the worldly good, and bestows on those who have renounced love for them the highest abode of Bliss. She is the Śreyas of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, and is the heart of the Divine. She is the compassion equally dwelling in every heart — *Īśvarī sarva bhūtānām hṛddeśe tiṣṭati* — even like the Divine Kṛṣṇa who had declared *Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtānām hṛddeśe tiṣṭati* —.[2] But it is a compassion that makes one see her *Māyā* to be a powerful instrument, veiling the bad and urging one to the good, rather than what it has appeared to the ignorant non-liberation-seeking individual, (the *āsura tāmasic* being seeking mere pleasure,) that which makes one see the bad as good and good as bad, even like the Kauravas were made to see in the construction of the Sabha by Mayā — an *asura*. The bliss that is attained by seeing the *satyasya satyam, ṛtasya ṛtam*, through the grace of Śrī, seated in the very heart of the Divine Absolute Godhead, having all the correlative phases of that one Divine, Transcendent-immanent interpenetrating and interlinking all, is beyond description.

The Āgama emphasizes the Bliss of Brahman whereas the Māyāvedānta emphasizes even like the Buddha and Sāmkhya the misery and delusiveness of the world processes. It is however necessary to see that both are necessary concepts, the Ānanda of Brahman and His created world is undoubtedly a call to experience the Divine through the Divine, a call to behold God's creation through God's eyes, *divya dṛṣti* or *divya darśana*, — *adhi-daiva*. The call to transcend proceeds from the contemplation of the universe through human and subhuman vision which reveals only sorrow, gloom, transiency, conflict, hatred and loneliness even when one is in society. From non-existent (Past) existent (Present) arises, and proceeds towards non-existence is a factual statement of all originations and deaths — *prāgabhāva* and *pradhvamsābhāva* are mediated by a present existence. This is Buddhist counter to Sat Karya — *prāgabhāva* and *uttarābhāva*.

The Call to Experience and The Call to Renounce or Transcend

The more we begin to hold these two-fold points within one view, viz., the *adhyātmika* and *adhidaiva*, the more clearly can we perceive their integrality or unity. Even the *adhibhūta* would become meaningful in the context of the Divine. They would bring together the divine and the human and in the process would reveal the concrete dynamism of the divine evolution, operating through love of God for man, and love of man for God mediated by the ever present catalytic activity of Śri.

It is to this analysis of Śri that Āgama paid more attention. The Śri Vaiṣṇava or Viśiṣṭādvaita of Ramanuja has mentioned that Śri has two other aspects, as Bhū, as Nīlā and *ākāratraya sampanna*, whereas Sri Aurobindo has proposed the fourfold forms of Sarasvati, Kali, Lakshmi and Mahesvari. But it is clear that whatever may be the status all are one in so far as they lead the individual through *śikṣa* (education or training or yoga) to the Ultimate Experience of the Divine as All-Bliss, in which all souls participate as heirs

[2] I do not wish to dilate on the Sakta aspect other than of Sri for they tend to blur the sense of transcendence which the concept of Sri as *Sreyas karini* implies. It is said to be *satvika Agama*, the others reveal the other aspects of rajas and tamas.

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to the infinite fortune and all this as indwelt by the Divine.

II

ADHYĀTMA VEDĀNTA

The most important aspect of the psychological approach seems to be the connection that man has with a body. His human demand or desire is to be living in the body for ever, its characteristic deteriorability and mortality notwithstanding. The desire for embodied existence is one aspect and that means that it is assumed by the soul that the body is the instrument of human pleasure and also is its abode (*bhogopakaraṇa* and *bhogāyatana*). This is of course the consensus of human opinion (*lokāyatika*). Further the hedonistic impulse found practical defeat of the pleasure impulse. The body as it became enfeebled was subject to pain, and privation of organs one by one became a distressing fact. Experience dictated the withdrawal from the body; 'grapes indeed have become sour' for the human being. It became a burden. Once the ass carried the man now the brother ass has to be carried along by the man — to use St. Francis's apt description of the body. This frustration egged on some to aspire for the perfection of the body, but it produced, as *hatha yogins* know, the opposite effect on others, who began to discard their bodies even as instruments of freedom, for even the freedom to pleasure was not granted by them. It is a long cry to perfecting the body either by *rasāyana* or alchemy or *āsanas* etc. Experience forces the individual to return into itself — this is the culmination of the Sāmkhyan pilgrimage and Neosāmkhyan *siddha*-doctrines. This is a case of the return of the prodigal, the ascent after the descent so far as the soul is concerned — losing and a finding or regaining. But it required courage to declare that the relation itself is a nightmarish one, though logical minded men tried to call it delusive and impossible. Modern philosophers have spoken about parallelism etc., between two absolutely different substances such as mind and matter.

One thing was certain, Vedānta has held that it is wrong to identify the soul with 'its body' for this is the cause of delusion that transfers sensations and emotions to the soul from the body. It is the body that suffers and has pains and all polar opposite experiences — the soul is just a witness and is neither bound nor suffers. It is always free. *Dehātmabhrama* is about the greatest single starting-point of the generalization of the *bhrama* theory. Its strength lies in this psychological analysis. The body is pregnant with misery, and the soul's rest or life in the body is a kind of hell-fire which the soul has to get out of. More logically Samkhyans argued that it is the body that falls away after full enjoyment by the Puruṣa or full display and/or exhaustion of its own powers of enticement and seductability. Real pleasure consists in oneself and not in objects external to the self or other than self. That one can get pleasure outside of oneself is the great delusion, which is most difficult to overcome. That one can get it even within oneself as one is, isolated from the Transcendent is another delusion.

Some have boldly declared that it is an adventure into externality which reveals the power and greatness of the individual and his potentialities but at the same time, remembering the widely extended misery in all its myraid forms, they had accepted that the soul having enjoyed all of externality had to return or yearns to return to its disembodied state. This is the Samkhyan psychology of *anubhava* and *mumukṣutva*.

They discerned however that the gross body was but a grossening of a subtle body which along with the soul moves from body to body; that is, when one body dies it resorts to another so as to run its round of *anubhava*, or to use the conventional way it moves according to its activities (*karma*) to the proper or appropriate body to attain its desires. However it is seen that evil activities produce deprivations or weakening of the instruments of enjoyment or organs and *manas* itself. Thus the thirsts of causal body which has the desire and ego to pursue the pleasure-hunt have to be finally quenched. It is when the soul with-

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draws from *ahamkāra* that it is freed from the whole process of experience of Nature. And nature is said to include according to Sāmkhya the *adhidaiva, adhyātma* and *adhibhūta* ills, ills from gods, body, and elements. It is only in a deprecatory sense that these terms are used by Sāmkhya. Liberation or *mokṣa* is possible only when all the three bodies are given up (*pretya*) — which is preliminary to emancipation. However the sense of freedom arises already in the deeper levels. Firstly the causal body is lost, then the subtle body and lastly the gross body. This almost suggests the Buddha's way of first putting an end to the arising of the cause, when the effect would wither away of its own accord. That is the reason why one is said to be *finally* liberated when the physical gross body falls down. This of course is a point of great dispute between the Vedāntas. Jīvanmukti is of the deeper mental levels but not of the outermost level. Mukti final and complete, which cuts off all rebirths, into *prakṛti* is only when all the bodies fall away from the self or soul, which wings its way into eternal beatitude. Jīvanmukti is a kind of advance emotion of liberation though not liberation itself. This concept however has been given a very meaningful connotation by Sri Aurobindo who holds that the liberated soul is full of real and full freedom through divine potence even in the three bodies of matter, life and mind, and this is due to its own celestial organization of the forces of matter, life and mind in terms of supermind (*vijñāna*) and which indeed transforms them into instruments of divine felicity, and facility.

However this existence of a spiritual being apart from any body is difficult to conceive of, though some seers have always held that there is a non-prakṛtic body, without any of the three guṇas, which is used by the soul when anything, that the Universal Divine may ordain, has to be done. It is held that these bodies are *satya*, real, and not products of *karma*. They are divine material, *rayi*.[3] The souls can remain without bodies of any kind whatsoever, *prākṛta* or *aprākṛta*, and remain 'absorbed in the love of the one central Divine Being who is the Lord of all worlds states'.

The Viśiṣṭādvaitic conception of the souls being themselves the bodies of God raises certain speculations not canvassed by the ancient thinkers. The soul *qua* body of God is defined differently by Ramanuja — it is a spiritual definition not a materialistic definition, organic or inorganic. The One Divine supports, controls and enjoys for Its own purposes exclusively the souls, and Nature, and as such they are the bodies of God. In this sense we can see that all the infinite number of souls are bodies of the One, and utterly exist in and through that One in all their being. The One is with each one of the many and inseparably (*apṛthak siddha*). This it is that makes for that fellowship with God, one of spontaneous love and union. With regard to Nature this is not the case, for the bodies of Nature are not *apṛthak siddha* but *pṛthak-siddha*. With respect to the Divine, Nature may be in inseparable relation of body but not with respect to the many of the One, the souls.

This brings out into relief the psychological experience of oneness and even mergence of the many in the One in exceptional mystic conditions, but one retains one's divine bodyness of God all the same. In fact the *Māṇḍūkya* intimates that the soul's three levels of waking, dream and sleep are splits of the one integral consciousness known as the Fourth state, when the Divine within (Godhead) is as it were withdrawn.[4]

The integrality of the individual consciousness is maintained by the Divine consciousness, and the formations of the states of consciousness from its sensible to the supersensible, from the unconscious, subconscious, conscious to the superconscious are possible only when the divine consciousness regulates these threefold consciousness, as *jāgrat, svapna*, and *suṣupti*, or *viśva, taijasa* and *prājña*. Psychologically, the aim of the individual soul is to

[3] Rayi : Primordial Matter — In Telugu rayi = stone ?

[4] My *Living Teaching of the Vedanta* (1934) and my *Aspects of Bhakti* : (1956).

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integrate his entire being through a basic dedication to the Highest One or Brahman or Īśvara.

Further, this is achieved only by the purification of all the sense-organs and *manas*, and the motor organs by renunciation of pleasure or fruits and by inner discipline and restraints called *ahimsa, aparigraha, asteya, satya* and *brahmacarya, sauca* and surrender to God (yama, niyama). Others counsel the performance of the five *mahāyajñas*, whilst still others inculcate the fivefold works of *abhigamana, upādāna, ijya, svādhyāya* and yoga, and still others initiate their members into *mantra, carya, dīkṣa, kriya* and *mudra*. Ancients counselled *vihita karma* as *dharma* and included all *yāgas* and *yajñas* under this category. Provided these are done for the purpose of pleasing the Divine or attaining the Divine and not for self-enjoyment they produce not only purity but also realization of the One in all the many and consequently bestow the oneness of all the many (harmony of the community of divinised souls).

ADHIBHUTA VISION

The perspective on Nature undoubtedly has been subsumed under the all-embracing concept of Divine Reality as also the almost universal principle of Organismic holism.

The natural condition of plurality that breaks up the unities or aggregates presents a special appeal to those who deem that one can proceed from parts to the whole, and there is supreme freedom to arrange or rearrange the patterns of Nature in any way according to the constructive and creative genius of the Divine Creator. The pluralistic analysis is not by any means invalid. It is about the only way that finite minds can gather and weld their fragmentary pieces or units or items of experience or knowledge into a unity or system. Dvaita Vedanta emphasizes this aspect of world's plurality and the pluralism of souls undergoes unification, continuation and division and reintegration in the world-process which is truly created again and again. This whole universe is formed and supported or upheld by God's omniscience and omnipotence. The enormous variety and creative emergence of all aggregates owe their existence to the Divine Godhead, known as the omnipresent supporter, Viṣṇu.

The whole reality is a creative manifestation of the Divine Godhead's power and the existence of the universe depends on Him alone. God is the sole independent, all the rest are dependent on Him (*pāratantrya*).

If we can treat Sāmkhya and Yoga as the psychological truths expounded by the Vedanta, Dvaita would become the Vedāntic exposition of Vaiśeṣika-Nyāya systems. In the light of the Upaniṣads it can be seen that all these three systems of Veda could be viewed as aspects of the Vedānta. An integral exposition of the Vedanta would require a just synthesis of the three major aspects or perspectives or rather the Divine perspective on the other two.

It is clear that Vedanta has a living dynamism, provided we could restore it to integrality. It was Sri Aurobindo who pointed out that Vedanta and the Veda are based on the logic of the infinite, and the logic of the finite cannot do justice to it. However the Vedantas whilst paying homage to the Infinite had descended to explain all the infinite on the basis of their finite logic, relational, governed by the laws of contradiction and square of opposition, *vyāpti* and so on. Vada became more important than Veda, and if philosophy means *vāda* we have indeed quite a good crop of works on their three kinds of conclusions from about the same premises.

An integral Vedanta should provide for the acceptance of reality of all levels of experience providing for the subsumption of the lower levels under the vaster higher levels, providing for the ascent and evolution of the individuals at lower levels to higher levels and ultimately assure beatitude for one and all in the One.

Pluralism becomes meaningful in the One, even as oneness becomes meaningful in plurality, and this is achieved by the realization of the Organismic nature of both the plurality

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and Oneness, in evolution as in liberation, in individual perfection as well as social harmony. Society can become a Brinda of God and God, the *ātma* or *śarīri* of the Society. The play of these would provide a wonderful realization of Ānanda, in and through superconsciousness and sense of attainment of all that existence seeks and finds.

BHAKTI FROM THE ADVAITIC STANDPOINT

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

ONE of the charges made against Advaita by its critics is that it provides no scope for religion, since its belief in the sole reality of Brahman obliterates all differences including that between the finite self and Īśvara and reduces both to the level of fictitious entities. The essential feature of religion is devotion or *bhakti*. This is possible only if there is a well-marked difference between the worshipper and the object of worship. If this difference is denied and the two are affirmed to be identical, it follows that there is no room for worship or prayer. Critics therefore make out that the Advaitic doctrine of *jīva-brahma-aikya* cuts the ground underneath the feet of religion and thus creates a void in the hearts of people. Most people stand in need of a Personal God to whom they could offer prayers and look for comfort and consolation in return. It is said further that there is no place for such a God in the scheme of Advaita which denies all determinations, including the personality of the Absolute. All determination is limitation arising from ignorance. Hence both Īśvara and Jīva as also the distinction between them are treated as false creations which are bound to disappear with the dawn of true knowledge. In the absence of the distinction between these two, who should offer worship to whom? Thus, it is said, that Advaita makes short work of religion and all that it stands for.

This is a serious charge and has to be examined with care. Prayer, worship and meditation are essential for man. They arise from the depths of the heart. They are the spontaneous expression of man's devotion and loyalty to a Being higher and more perfect than himself in every important respect. Being conscious of his own finitude and limitations, man cannot help lifting up his hands in obeisance to another person whom he regards as more advanced than himself. Paying respect to spirituality arises from an instinct planted deep in the hearts of men. It is untaught and hence cannot be suppressed. Śri Śaṅkara, the main architect of the Advaita Philosophy, is quite alive to this fact. In a famous stanza in his *Śivānandalahari* (59) he says that "his heart turns most naturally to the hallowed feet of Lord Śiva which can alone confer abiding happiness". He illustrates this spontaneous bent of his heart by means of four examples, all drawn from bird-life. It is like the swan seeking the lotus-pond, the chātaka looking for a cloud-burst to slake its thirst, the chakrawaka eagerly awaiting sun-rise and the chakora the cool rays of the moon. This natural bent is turned into a conscious urge when man realizes that there is little happiness in wordly pursuits and that, therefore, he must look to a more abiding source for mental peace. "Let my mind" he says in the very next stanza, "seek the feet of Lord Śiva which can remove all fear and confer permanent happiness." He illustrates this conscious approach by means of seven examples, all relating to human beings in distress. The man who is being carried away by a torrential stream frantically tries to cling to the bank; the way-farer who is burnt by the scorching rays of the sun runs to the shade of a tree; the man who is drenched to the skin by a heavy down-pour of rain, betakes himself to some haven of refuge; the famished man seeks the hospitality of some

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generous host; the man in dire pecuniary distress appeals to a kind donor for some relief; one who is caught in a lonely place in utter darkness eagerly looks for a ray of light from some quarter and the man who is freezing in chill weather seeks a fire-place wherein he can warm himself. Lest these examples give rise to the impression that man should think of God only when he is in distress, Śri Śankara adds in the next stanza (61) that true devotion consists in the human mind betaking itself to the feet of Lord Śiva without any ulterior motives whatsoever and resting there for all time. This disinterested movement is again illustrated by means of five well-chosen examples. These three stanzas, 59 to 61, of *Śivānandalahari* most clearly elucidate Śri Śankara's conception of *bhakti*. It arises in the human heart in a spontaneous manner and to prevent its acquiring a selfish tinge, a selfless and disinterested direction must be given to it. The phychological as well as the ethical aspects of *bhakti* are clearly stated in these stanzas.

Another important fact that we must note is that Śri Śankara has not only written his great commentaries on the Vedānta Sūtra, the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavad Gita, but has also composed hymns in praise of the leading gods in the Hindu pantheon. These stotras breathe genuine religious emotion and dwell on all its aspects, such as the feeling of man's helplessness, his consciousness of being a sinner, his utter lack of merit, his sole dependance on the mercy of God, his conviction that out of pure compassion God will come to his rescue and that he will be saved from utter ruin. It is true that there is an under-current of Advaitic thought in these religious hymns but, far from making them pale or colourless, it confers a high dignity on them. There is no narrowness, exclusiveness or fanaticism in them. Rather they are suffused with the spirit of tolerance, respect for other modes of worship and the conviction that whatever the path men tread they will ultimately reach the same goal.

These two facts, Śri Śankara's recognition that *bhakti* has a necessary place in man's spiritual evolution and his composing scores of genuine religious lyrics to meet this need, must give the quietus to the charge that there is no room for religion or *bhakti* in his Advaita Philosophy. The charge arises from a confusion of standpoints. As a true philosopher, Śri Śankara pushes his enquiry into the nature of Ultimate Reality to the bitter end without resting in half-way houses. He does not allow politics, religion, ethics or even logic to hamper the free march of his thought. With him, philosophy is an autonomous pursuit and there is no question of accommodating it to suit the needs of our political, religious or moral life. Merely because religious life presupposes the distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped, he is not prepared to stop short of the ultimate identity which is forced upon him as much by logic and personal experience as by the revealed texts. But he recognises a lower standpoint wherein the distinction between God and the finite self is real and the consequent urge on the part of the latter to offer worship to the former naturally arises. The path of intuition and communion is the highest and it is open only to the adepts. From this standpoint, Brahman is the sole reality, not admitting of any kind of difference. But this highest standpoint is not reached at one bound. The path to it lies through the intellect which revels in distinctions of all kinds. At this level Nirguṇa Brahman wears a Saguṇa aspect and appears as Īśvara, as Brahma, Vishnu and Śiva, as Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati, as Ganapati, Subrahmanya and as Surya. These gods are fit for worship and they are recognized only for this purpose. Amalānanda says in his *Kalpataru* that 'as a concession to the weak-minded, the Supreme Being which is attributeless appears as endowed with attributes'[1]. Śri Śankara has recognised Śiva, Viṣṇu, Devi, Ganapati, Subrahmanya and Sūrya as purely Vedic gods and therefore as eminently fit for worship. He is not only the founder of Advaita Vedanta (*advaita sthāpanācārya*) but

[1] निर्विशेषं परं ब्रह्म साक्षात्कर्तुं येऽनीश्वराः ।
मन्दाः तेऽनुकम्प्यन्ते सविशेषनिरूपणैः ।

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also the founder of the six modes of worshipping God (*ṣaṇmata sthāpanācāryā*). There is no contradiction here. We need not wonder how the great thinker who swears by the sole reality of Brahman at the same time brings himself to recommend not only worship to a Personal God but also recognizes six different gods. Worship itself is based on distinction and recognizing six different gods for worship is to revel in distinctions. The contradiction disappears, however, if we remember that Śri Śankara's philosophy can be viewed from two standpoints, a higher and a lower, the intuitive and the intellectual, the transcendental and the empirical. The recognition of two standpoints, like the recognition of the principle of grades of eligibility (*adhīkāri bheda*) stands him in very good stead. It enables him to reconcile a high and uncompromising nondualism with rank pluralism. God is one though gods can be many. At the empirical level a thinker may recognize the possibility of many gods though at the transcendent level the Absolute is strictly one without a second, beyond all names and forms.

The proliferation does not arise from any urge in the Supreme Being. It never undergoes the least change or transformation. To the eye of intuition it is strictly homogeneous, a mass of sentience, pure and untainted by difference of any kind. To the eye of the intellect, however, it appears in a different complexion. It is the nature of the intellect to break up the original unity into subject and object, knower and known. Consequently in the place of the unity of the Absolute there appears God in relation to a finite self. This God, Īśvara, assumes other forms by the same process of differentiation. The three functions of Īśvara, creating, sustaining and destroying the world, are separated and assigned to three different gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Once the process of differentiation starts, there is no end to it. Viṣṇu assumes many forms, the most popular of them being those of Rama and Krishna. The energy-aspect of the three gods is hypostatized as Śakti or Devi. She assumes three forms, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Pārvati, these being the consorts of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively. Śiva and Pārvati have two sons, Gaṇapati and Subrahmanya. It is in this way that the Absolute which is without a name and form is made to appear under many names and many forms. Each god has a local habitation, a paraphernalia, a separate mode of worship, separate festivals and a separate litany. All these destinctions are imposed on the Absolute by the finite intellect which is handicapped by congenital limitations and is consequently incapable of rising to the transcendental level of integral experience. Śri Śankara will never allow us to forget that names and forms are mere superimpositions on the Nirguṇa Brahman. They owe their origin to the limitations of the finite intellect and the varying tastes and temperaments of human beings. This truth was recognized long ago in a celebrated *mantra* of the Ṛg Veda. 'Reality is one, though Brahmins call it by many names such as Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni and so forth'. Almost in the same words but with a further clarification, Śri Śankara writes in one of his minor poems. 'I worship Hari, the destroyer of the darkness of empirical life, who, though one, is spoken of as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and so forth *owing to diversity in the outlook of human beings*.'[2]

A plurality of gods is recommended to suit the varying tastes of individuals. All may not be attracted by any one particular form of Godhead. To be accepted as a fit object of worship by any particular individual, God must be sufficiently akin to him to be understood, sufficiently different to provoke his attention, sufficiently great to command his admiration and must have to His credit sufficient achievements which will appeal to him. The personal factor cannot be ignored even in the matter of choosing the God whom one would worship. Likes and dislikes play a large part. Śri Śankara makes full allowance for such personal kinks and leaves individuals free to make their

[2] ब्रह्मा विष्णू रुद्रहुताशौ रविचन्द्राविन्द्रो वायुर्यज्ञ
इतीत्थं परिकल्प्य ।
एकं सन्तं यं बहुधाऽऽहुर्मतिभेदात्तं संसारध्वान्त
विनाशं हरिमीडे ।

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choice. God of one's choice is known as his *Iṣṭa Devatā*. He can worship his deity with the help of an idol, a picture or metal-image if necessary, or, if he is capable, in more abstract forms such as reciting litanies and hymns, meditating on the *mantra* appropriate to his God. After sufficient practice at these two levels he can rise to the meditation on Saguṇa Brahman in terms of one of the *Vidyās* set forth in the Upaniṣads and lastly [3] to the contemplation of the identity between the finite self and the Infinite by constant and unintermittant repetition of the '*Hamsa mantra*'.[4]

But we should never forget that all these are only symbols that we have created for ourselves to act as supports for meditation. Strictly speaking there can be no symbol of Him whose name is great glory.[5] But we, frail human beings, cannot bring our minds to contemplate straightaway on the nameless and formless Brahman. We badly need some concrete support. Recognising this need Śri Śankara defines meditation 'as the process of concentrating the mind on some resting place or support recognized by *śāstra* and generating a series of like thoughts without the interruption of anything contrary to the series.'[6] Whatever form of God a man worships he must regard it as the Supreme Brahman. The notion of the Highest must be superimposed on Śiva, Viṣṇu, Devi or Sūrya or any other god. That these gods are only partial manifestations of the Supreme Brahman and can never be treated as Its substitutes is emphasized again and again by Śri Śankara.

We have said that any particular individual is free to exercise his choice and accept any one of the gods for his worship. This preference must not carry with it any exclusion. The preference is a matter of pure individual taste. It would be sheer folly to allow it to run riot and develop into narrow exclusiveness or fanaticism. In principle and in ultimate essence we should see no difference between one form of Godhead and another. Appayya Dīkṣīta said in a well-known *śloka* that somehow 'he had a preference for the Lord with the crescent moon on His head though in substance he saw no difference between Maheswara and Janārdana'.[7] The true Advaitin can see no reason for making any difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu or, for the matter of that, between any Hindu god and any Christian or Mohammedan god. All these are forms that we have imposed on the Nameless and the Formless for purposes of worship. If this fact is borne in mind, there will never arise an attitude of hatred or intolerance towards other religions or gods other than the one whom we have selected for worship. In the prayer he addresses to the holy river Ganga, Śri Śankara fervently wishes that he cultivated *bhakti* which made no difference between Hari and Hara.[8] Sri Chandrasekhara Bhārati, the late pontiff of Śringeri and a renowned *jīvanmukta* of recent times, used to say that Śiva could be worshipped by reciting the thousand names of Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu, likewise, could be worshipped by reciting the thousand names of Śiva.[9]

Monotheistic religions swear not only by one God but go on to identify it with a particular name and form. The adherents of such religions somehow get themselves convinced

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[3] The four stages in the evolution of prayer are set forth in the following stanza.

प्रथमा प्रतिमा पूजा जपस्तोत्राणि मध्यमा
उत्तमा मानसी पूजा सोऽहंपूजा उत्तमोत्तमा ।

[4] The Hamsa *mantra* is हंस सोऽहं सोऽहं हंसः In the Upanisads we frequently come across the statement that the person in the solar orb and the person in the finite individual are identical (vide *Isa* 16; Taittiriya II. 9 and III. X. 3; and Chandogya IV. xi. l.). In Haristuti, stanza 28, 30 and 31 Sri Sankara refers to this as the highest form of meditation and adds that Indra realized his identity with the Supreme Brahman by means of this form.

[5] *Svetaswatara* IV. 19.

[6] *Memorial Edition*, Vol. VI p. 9.

[7] महेश्वरे वा जगतां अधीश्वरे
जनार्दने वा जगदन्तरात्मनि ।
न वस्तु भेदप्रतिपत्तिरस्ति मे
तथापि बुद्धिः तरुणेन्दुशेखरे ।

[8] भूयाद्भक्तिरविच्युता हरिहराद्वैतात्मिका शाश्वती ।
Gangastaka, 8.

[9] His formula was: शिवाय विष्णुरूपाय शिवरूपाय विष्णवे ।

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that their 'doxy' alone is orthodoxy and all other 'doxies' are heterodoxies. Firmly believing that their path is the only true path they seek to convert people following a different path to their own by persuasion, if possible, by force, if necessary. Wars in the name of religion, unfortunately, take place even today. We had an instance of it in our own north-western border. Medeival Europe was torn by religious persecutions. In our own faith, those who lack the Advaitic background develop either into Vīraśaivas or Vīravaiṣṇavas. They carry exclusiveness to an extreme degree and, unfortunately, allow it to develop into hatred. Advaita provides the surest basis for cultivating an attitude of not only tolerance towards other faiths but also love and respect. All religions and all forms of worship have a part to play in the spiritual education of human beings. Each has its own charm and its own appeal. All men cannot be made to fit into the same steel-frame. In His infinite wisdom, God has put all men in their proper environment where they have the conditions most suitable for their further evolution. On the principle of *adhikāri bheda* every religion and every mode of worship stands justified. This is the Advaitin's attitude towards institutions also, political, social, religious and moral.

We said above that whatever the particular name and form of the God whom we select for worship we must regard it as the Supreme Brahman. This fact is brought home to our minds in the hymns that Śri Śankara has composed on the several deities. The very first line in the hymn that he has composed in praise of Sri Rama is : विशुद्धं परं सच्चिदानन्दरूपं ॥ Similarly the hymn on Viṣṇu speaks of Him as चिदंशं विभुं निर्विकल्पं निरीहं निराकारमोंकारगम्यम्। His *Govindāṣṭakaṁ* begins with the line सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं नित्यमनाकाशं परमाकाशम् ॥ In stanza 5 of *Kṛṣṇāṣṭakaṁ*, Śri Śankara identifies Kṛṣṇa with the Brahman who fought on the side of the gods and secured victory for them over the *asuras*.[10] He confirms this identification by adding in the next stanza that men can transcend the cycle of births and deaths only by meditating on Sri Kṛṣṇa.[11] His affirmations with regard to the identity of Devi with the Supreme Brahman are even more unequivocal. In *Soundaryalahari* (97) he says that people might speak of Her as the consort of Brahmā or of Viṣṇu or of Śiva, but in his opinion She is over and beyond these three ; She is really the Mahāmāyā associated with Brahman. Her glory is beyond words and she is transcendent.[12] In view of Her superior excellence Śri Śankara feels compelled to make total submission of his body, mind and spirit to her. 'My mind should always be absorbed in meditating on your form and my head should always lie low at your feet.'[13]

If the god selected for worship is identified with the Supreme Brahman, it follows that it is the highest reality, the highest truth, the highest beauty and therefore the highest value. This realization will make the devotee turn to God for His own sake and not to gain sundry, personal ends. Ordinarily people offer devotion to a particular god with the object of averting some evil or acquiring something which they desire to possess. This is not true devotion. These people look to their god as a means whereby they could gain their ends and nothing more. If they could gain what they want by other means, they would gladly do so and not think of God at all. Nor are they likely to continue their devotions after they have secured what they wanted. If they fail to succeed in spite of the prayers and offerings they make to God, they will not hesitate to denounce Him. They may even preach atheism. The test of true devotion is steady, unflinching and unshakable faith in

[10] vide *Kena Upanisad* II.

[11] विना यस्य ज्ञानं जनिमृतिभयं याति जनता ।

[12] He expresses the same view in Tripurasundari Vedapatha stotram 46 शश्वन्मातः प्रत्यगद्वैतरूपां See stanza 79 in the same stotra and stanza 113 in Tripurasundari Manasa Puja stotram.

[13] यत्रैव यत्रैव मनो मदीयं
तत्रैव तत्रैव तव स्वरूपम् ।
यत्रैव यत्रैव शिरो मदीयं
तत्रैव तत्रैव पदद्वयं ते ।

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God as the supreme value for whom any sacrifice is worth making. This is *ananya* or *ekānta bhakti*. The *Bhagavad Gita* emphasizes the importance of such *bhakti* in several contexts. The Lord says that such single-minded devotion will carry the *bhakti* to the highest realization. 'Those who consecrate all their actions to Me and regard Me as their highest value, who meditate on Me and worship Me with exclusive devotion, I save such men from death and the cycle of repeated births and deaths, since their minds are firmly set on Me.'[14] 'On those who are even devoted to Me in love and worship Me with all their heart, I bestow the understanding by which they come to Me. Out of compassion for them, do I dwell in their hearts and dispel the darkness born of ignorance by the shining lamp of wisdom.'[15] Rightly does the *Bhāgavata* hold up for admiration the genuine and unsophisticated devotion of the shepherdesses of Brindavan. It is said that their minds were absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, that their minds were full of Him, that all their talk was about Him, that they always sang His praises and, in the result, clean forgot their homes.[16] Unless there is extra-ordinary devotion to a Higher Power, women will not easily forget their husbands and children. The Lord appreciates their devotion and adds that He does not know how to reward them.[17] In forgetting their homes, the Gopis had attained the heights of God-intoxication. In the *Yoga Vāsiṣṭa*[18] there is reference to two levels of devotion to God. In the initial stage one may remain in the house, attend carefully to all domestic and social obligations and yet be thinking of God in the inmost recesses of one's heart. In the second stage one forgets one's home and is lost in God-devotion. This is the stage which the Gopis had attained and it is held to be the highest. Lord Kṛṣna was everything to them. He appeared to them as the embodiment of the highest truth, the highest beauty and the highest value.

We may add that it is in this light that Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared to Śri Śankara and some other eminent Advaitins and captured their imagination also. In his *Gangāṣṭakaṁ* (7) he says he would gladly renounce all sundry desires, live on a handful of the waters of the holy river and spend his days in the meditation of Lord Kṛṣṇa.[19] In his *Prabodhasudhākara* he devotes nearly a hundred stanzas to state at length his devotion to the Lord of the Yadus (*yadupati*). He makes out that in Kṛṣṇa he finds the meeting place of Nirguṇa and Saguṇa Brahman.[20] In *Kṛṣṇabhakti*, he says, he attains the same experience of Brahman which adepts in *astāṅga yoga* attain in *Nirvikalpaka samādhi*. Madhusudana Saraswati, another famous Advaitin, confessed to the same experience. "Let those whose minds are well-trained in yoga pursue the path of the attributeless Brahman. I wish them god-speed. For me, I will be content to have always before my eyes the figure of Kṛṣṇa who moved about on the sandy-banks of the river Yamuna. For me, there is no truth higher than Lord Kṛṣṇa." Nārayana Tīrtha, another Sanyāsin of the Advatic persuasion, also detected an element of mysticism in Kṛṣṇabhakti and gave expression to his raptures in a well-known work known as "*Kṛṣṇa-leelā-taraṅgini*" Leelā Śūka, the author of "*Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta*", says that though he was a Saiva and given to meditate on the five-syllabled mantra, his mind was irresistably drawn towards Lord Kṛṣṇa. In the *Bhāgavata* it is said that even great yogins who have set their hearts on the cosmic Absoulte are powerfully drawn to the meditation of Lord Kṛṣṇa.[21] We must suppose that these great Advaitins, though they had crossed the realm of distinctions, volunta-

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[14] *Gita*, XII. 6-7.

[15] *Ibid.*, X. 10-11, compare हार्दंसंतमसापहा in *Lalita Trisati Stotram*.

[16] *Bhagavata*, X. xxx. 44.

[17] *Ibid.*, X. xxx. 11. 22.

[18] *Yoga Vasista*: Upasana Prakarana, Chap. 74. St. 83-85.

[19] भगवति तवतीरे नीरमात्राशनोहं
विगतविषयतृष्णः कृष्णमाराधयामि ।

[20] *Prabodha Sudhakara*: St. 194.

[21] आत्मारामश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युरुक्रमे ।
कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्थम्भूतगुणो हरिः ॥
Bhagavata, I. vii. 10.

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rily made a temporary sojourn in it just to taste the bliss of Kṛṣṇa-bhakti. The sense of dualism is an evil in the state of ignorance but in the state of enlightenment, if it is assumed for the nonce, it has a charm all its own.[22] Sri Ramakrishna used to say that he preferred to taste sugar to becoming one with sugar.

This is all quite appropriate for realized souls. As for others who are yet in the stage of striving, *bhakti* does imply a sense of dualism. It also implies giving a form and name to the Highest which in reality is formless and nameless, singing its praises in terms of stotras though it is indescribable and giving a particular habitation to it though it is omnipresent, oppressed by a sense of sin. Appayya Diksita begged for forgiveness : " O Lord, for purposes of meditation I have given a name and form to You though You do not have them ; by means of stotras I have sought to describe You, though You are indescribable ; I have journeyed to sacred places to have *darsan* of You, though You are omnipresent. I have committed these three sins in my ignorance for which I crave Your pardon ".[23]

But it provides excellent training to the mind to get over the two kinds of dualism mentioned above. Śri Śankara assigns the foremost place to *bhakti* among the accessories which prepare the ground for liberation.[24] Long and steady practice in *sagunopāsana* produces the required ripeness in the mind whereby it could transform the consciousness of the Absolute into Absolute consciousness. Amalānanda has said in his " *Kalpataru* " that Saguṇa Brahman sheds its attributes and appears in its true form as Nirguṇa Brahman when the mind is sufficiently purified.[25] The attributes are superimposed on Nirguṇa Brahman by the human mind in its state of ignorance. When the mind has acquired the requisite degree of purity by steady discipline in *bhakti-yoga*, the veil is removed and Truth in its native splendour dawns on it. This is the highest consummation to which disinterested *bhakti* can lead according to Advaita Vedanta.

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[22] द्वैतं मोहाय बोधात्प्राक् प्राप्तेबोधे मनीषया ।
भक्त्यर्थं कल्पितं द्वैतं अद्वैतादपि सुन्दरम् ॥

[23] रूपं रूपविवर्जितस्य भवतो ध्यानेन यत्कल्पितं
स्तुत्या अनिर्वचनीयता दूरीकृता यन्मया ।
व्यापित्वं च निराकृतं भगवतः यत्तीर्थयात्रादिना
क्षन्तव्यं जगदीशतद्विकलता दोषत्रयं मत्कृतम् ॥

[24] *Vivekachudamani* — St. 31. Also *Aparoksanubhuti* — St. 3.

[25] वशीकृते मनस्येषां सगुणब्रह्मशीलनात् ।
तदेवाविर्भवेत्साक्षातपेत उपाधिकल्पनम् ॥
compare also *Gita*, XVIII. 55.

SĀMKHYA AND THE UPAMĀNA PRAMĀNA

ANIMA SEN GUPTA

UPAMĀNA has been defined by the Nyāya in the following manner,

" *Prasiddha sādharmyāt sādhyasādhanamupamānam* " ' that is *upamana*, which by an important point of resemblance in it enables us to know about the thing to be known.' To be more explicit, let us take the oft quoted assertion, ' As the cow, so is the *gavaya* ' — (*Yathā gaustathā gavaya iti*). This assertion (when heard) gives the inexperienced person a knowledge of the resemblance between the cow and the *gavaya*. It is due to this *vākyārthajñāna* that the inexperienced person understands the animal bearing resemblance with the cow as *gavaya*, although he is seeing the animal for the first time in his life. This assertion, namely, ' *yathā gaustathā gavaya iti* ' helps the inexperienced person to understand the relation between the name ' *gavaya* ' and the animal denoted by this name. This knowledge of the relation between *saṁjñā* and *saṁjñī* is what is called *upamiti jñāna* : the

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knowledge of the similarity between the cow and the *gavaya*, brought about by the assertion '*yathā gaustathā gavaya iti*', is the *karaṇa* of this *upamiti jñāna*. This is how the Nyāya school has understood the nature of *upamāna* as the source of our *upamiti jñāna*.

According to Sāṁkhya, however, *upamāna* is not an independent source of knowledge. *Vākyārtha jñāna*, produced by the assertion,—'*yathā gaustathā gavaya iti*' is purely verbal. As soon as the inexperienced person hears this sentence, the relevant *buddhivṛtti* is formed immediately. It is this *buddhivṛtti* which serves as *pramāṇa* and not the assertion 'as the cow, so is the *gavaya*'. The knowledge, that the term *gavaya* is denotative of the animal similar to the cow, is purely inferential. The inferential process is like this :— *Gavaya* is a term which is qualified by *pravṛtti-nimitta* of the form of *gavayatva*.

As there is no other *vṛtti* like *lakṣanā* etc., the term *gavayatva* is used by the experienced persons only in the case of an animal qualified by *gavayatva*.

If a term, devoid of all other *vṛttis*, is used in a particular sense only, then that term (here *gavaya*) becomes *pravṛtti nimittaka* of that particular sense (here *gavayatva*).

In inference, a '*sāmānya sādhya*' (major term in the form of a universal) is, generally, established on the basis of '*sāmānya vyāpti*'. When, from the perception of smoke, fire is inferred, it is 'the universal fire' which is established in a particular place. If this is so, then by means of inference, we can only say that the term '*gavaya*' has got some *pravṛtti nimitta* but the fact that this *pravṛtti nimitta* is to be had in *gavayatva* only, cannot be established by means of the type of *anumāna* mentioned above. *Śabda*, on the other hand, helps us to know that similarity with the cow is the *pravṛtti nimitta* in the case of the term *gavayatva*. That *gavayatva* is the *pravṛtti nimitta* of the term '*gavaya*' is not made known to us by *śabda*.

Perception, by itself, can only reveal to us an animal having resemblance with the cow. It is only when perception is aided by *śabda* that we come to have a perceptual knowledge of the animal, bearing the name of *gavaya* and also of *gavayatva* as the *Pravṛtti nimitta*.

Since perception, inference of the form mentioned above and *śabda* cannot give us the knowledge of the relation between the term '*gavaya*' and the animal that is denoted by the term and is also qualified by *gavayatva* (which is its *pravṛtti nimitta*), *upamāna* has been regarded as an independent source of knowledge by the Nyāya School.

But, apart from the type of inference already mentioned, there is also another form of inference by means of which a *viśeṣa sādhya* (*sādhya* as a particular) can be established even on the basis of *sāmānya vyāpti*. Where '*itara bheda*' is possible, *sādhya*, established on the basis of *vyāpti*, is a particular one. For example, if in a particular place, coal is known to be the only fuel in the absence of other forms of combustibles, then, on seeing smoke, one can very well infer that there is that particular fire which is generated from coal. This is the type of inference which has been mentioned in the place where we have explained how the Sāṁkhya school attempts to prove the inferential nature of *upamāna*. The term 'gavaya' is used by the experienced persons only in the case of an animal qualified by *gavayatva*.

Of course, nowhere in the available commentaries of the Sāṁkhya-Kārikā, this type of inference has been explicitly mentioned. Even so, there is no harm in supposing that the Sāṁkhya Philosophers were cognizant of this form of inference as it is the form which can fulfil the function of *upamāna* in the most satisfactory manner.

No one can get anything unless he earns it. We are responsible for what we are ; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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MODERN SCIENCE AND ANCIENT CONCEPT OF REALITY

T. R. SESHADRI

THE determination of the nature of the Real is the quest of all philosophy and of all Science. Bhagawan Sri Krishna's famous statement 'The unreal never is and the real never is not' represents the crucial criterion of the Real. The real exists not only in the present, but existed also in the past and will continue to exist in the future. It is beyond the limitation of time. There is also the question of the state of consciousness of the individual or observer. All are familiar with the ordinary waking state where the perceiver and the objects of the tangible world play their part. In the dream state the physical body and the organs are inactive and the external world is invisible, and an internal world is revealed with its own subject, object and instrument of knowledge; the mind is the sole active entity. It creates by itself and perceives. Therefore mind seems to be self-sufficient in dream and it is essential in the waking state also. In deep sleep there is no activity except the consciousness of existence, and there is peace, and no perception. The ultimate Real should exist in all these states; Vedanta has in a unique fashion co-ordinated the experience of the three states and arrived at the conclusion that there exists a fourth state of unconditioned and undifferentiated pure consciousness transcending all limitations. It says 'Brahman is real and the world is illusory.'

In all Indian philosophical thought personal realization or direct perception is the criterion of reality. But for those who are aspirants, the words of the seers who have seen the truth i.e., Vedas, also form an acceptable criterion since without faith in them there will be no means of rapid progress.

There is a tendency amongst philosophers to give a limited definition of science, that it relates only to the material world, and cry it down as insufficient. The same persons call 'Ātma Vidyā' which gives the highest truth as spiritual science. I wish to submit that science has no such limitations and it embraces all ways to knowledge and all knowledge. Just as we have branches in material science such as chemistry, physics and biology, there are major divisions in scientific studies and knowledge as material science, mental science, psychology and spiritual science (Ātma Vidyā). You may be interested to know that the Royal Society which stated as its objectives 'the promotion, by authority of experiment, of the sciences of natural things and of the useful arts to the glory of God, the Creator and the advantage of the human race,' elected Freud the founder of psycho-analysis as one of its distinguished Foreign Fellows and thus gave recognition to psychology as a science.

I may illustrate the attitude of science and of its methods by means of suitable examples in what may be called seeing the unseen. All of us use the terms atoms and molecules. They are very tiny indeed and the most powerful microscopes cannot make them visible to the eye. But we know they are there because of mental perception based on the effects that we observe. We have gone further and have been studying a great deal about sub-atomic particles. We are sure there are electrons and nucleons and can demonstrate their presence. They are normally unseen and the ordinary man cannot see them. At the same time, I may emphasize that the knowledge of the gross is not unreal; it is only incomplete and partial and we see more and more fully when we understand the details

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by deeper mental perception. In effect, we are advancing towards fuller and fuller knowledge.

I shall give another example. We have a beautiful red substance called carotene which is present in carrot as its colouring matter and also in the leaves of all plants. It is the source of vitamin A and hence is called provitamin-A. An ordinary man without serious scientific education will describe it as a red crystalline substance. He can get a magnified picture of the crystals. Next he could use it for colouring foods, particularly oil and ghee; besides colour it also adds food value. But for a chemist it means much more. Its molecules though tiny are still complex, each molecule is represented by the formula $C_{40}H_{56}$ containing 96 atoms and these atoms are arranged in a definite manner as indicated in its structure having definite anatomical features. More recent studies have shown that the different parts of the molecule are oscillating. Not only the electrons in it move under the influence of light to produce colour but the atoms of carbon and hydrogen oscillate making a breathing in and out movement. These are too subtle to be seen by the eye, but our minds see them based on the effects noticed in what are called spectra. We can take the spectra not only with visible light but also with ultra-violet and infra-red light. Raman spectra are a convenient modification of the last. Quite recently we have been using another method of observation and we call it by a big name 'Nuclear Magnetic Resonance spectrum'. On account of their spin certain atomic nuclei e.g., protons or nuclei of hydrogen atoms, behave like tiny magnets and make precessions (just as a spinning top under gravity makes precession) in the earth's magnetic field and this property can be used for various studies. One of the discoverers of this phenomenon, Purcell in his Nobel Prize lecture narrates as follows:

> 'I have not yet lost a feeling of wonder, and of delight, that this delicate motion (precession of nuclei) should reside in all the ordinary things around us, revealing itself only to him who looks for it. I remember, in the winter of our first experiments, just seven years ago, looking on snow with new eyes. There the snow lay around my door-step, great heaps of protons quietly precessing in the earth's magnetic field.'

Similarly in carotene also we could see not only the arrangement of atoms, the movement of electrons and the vibration of the atoms, but also the precession of the protons gyrating like tops. This is not the end of our vision. We may in future see more fully. All that I have said about carotene may be said about a crystal of sugar. It is only a beautiful crystal temptingly sweet to ordinary human beings, but to the scientist it is much more; it represents a structure having ($C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$) 45 atoms disposed in the form of two rings linked together, along with the vibrations of the atoms and gyrations; seeing this secret of structure he knows everything about the substance and can describe its properties and behaviour.

I can recapitulate another interesting development of science which may be known to most of us. Earlier we were familiar with matter. We found that it could change its form and also enter into new combinations, but there was no loss of matter. It is a common school experiment to prove that nothing is lost when a candle burns. All this is embodied in the Law of Conservation of energy. The earliest form of energy familiar to scientists was mechanical energy. Heat was later realized to be another form and the equivalence between the two forms was established by Count Rumford and others. This is called the mechanical equivalent of heat.

Then came the recognition of electrical energy and chemical energy as other forms. During recent years the difference between mass and energy has been abolished. Mass is now known to be a condensed form of energy and has its equivalent; or energy is only a rarefied form of mass and has the same equivalent. Thus there is only one entity call it energy or matter, a unique unification in physical existence.

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What I wish to emphasize here is the progress of science towards fuller and fuller knowledge. In general, the mental and spiritual attitude is the same in different subjects of science but techniques differ. The supreme and essential instrument is of course the mind of the scientist and his capacity for vision. If he studies other people's mind with enough devotion and skill he practises the science of psychology and if he delves deep into his own mind and studies himself it becomes spiritual science.

All intelligent people recognize that there is a long way between reading, ordinary understanding and full understanding and realization. This has been emphasized in spiritual science. Capacities of individuals vary considerably. Some look upon the Real as marvellous, others speak of it as wonderful, others again hear of it as wonder; and still others though hearing do not understand it at all. This is true in physical science also with regard to the understanding and appreciation of full reality and of living and working in the light of the full truth. The aim of Vedanta is not to negate the world, but to establish the fuller reality of Brahman. Science in its progress tends towards the same goal.

HANUMAN
(A Study)

M. V. SRIDATTASARMA

(I)

SPEAKING of the allies who participated in the fight of Rama with the Rakṣasas (a powerful race dominant in the south, whose capital was at Lanka, in the island of Ceylon), Lassen observes: 'The only other actors who appear in addition to these (Rakṣasas) are the monkeys, which ally themselves to Rama and render him assistance. This can only mean that when Āryan Kṣatriyas made hostile incursions into the South, they were aided by another portion of the indigenous tribes'. Dr Macdonald interprets the story of the *Ramayana* as 'an allegory representing the first attempt of the Āryans to conquer the south or to spread their civilization over the Deccan and Ceylon'.

Pañchānan Mitra in his *Prehistoric India*, holds the view that the Vānaras which participated in the battle of Rama against Ravana represent only the indigenous tribes and not monkeys. He opines that on the analogy of the Bantus in Africa, who wear a sash resembling a tail behind their loins, the tail of these tribes may be a similar decoration.

In his book *The Ramayana and the Mahabharata*, the late Romesh Chandra Dutt observed as follows: 'With that contempt for aboriginal races, which has marked civilized conquerors in all ages, the poet (Vālmīki) describes the dwellers of these regions as monkeys and bears. But the modern reader sees through these strange epithets, and in the descriptions of the social and domestic manners, the arts and industries, the sacred rites and ceremonies and the civic and political life of the Vānaras, the reader will find that the poet even imports Aryan customs into his account of the dwellers of Southern India. They formed an alliance with Rama and fought for him and they helped him to recover his wife from the king of Ceylon'.

The kingdom of the Vānaras was in Mysore, their chief city being Kiṣkindha, near the village of Hampe on the Tungabhadra.[1] In Jain literature, we see that the Vānaras are described as demigods bestowed with superhuman strength and powers like the Vidyadharas. The Padma Purana,

[1] R. C. Dutt identifies Kiskindha with the Nilgiris.

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a Jain work of the seventh century mentions this race, bearing the symbols of parasols &c.

tathā vānara cinheṇa chatrādi viniveṣitāḥ.
vidyādharāḥ ataḥ khyātāh vānarā iti
viṣṭape.

This was a cultured and civilized race or class of beings, who were spokesmen of the Ahimsa Tattva. The term Vānara or Markata, it is said, is derived from the Dravidian (Tamil) term Makkala — meaning landholder according to B. C. Majumdar. It is said that this tribe lived in Dandakaranya (*History of Bengali language*).

In Buddhist literature, we find narratives connected with the pilgrimage of the Tripīṭaka to India in the seventh century. The exploits of a monkey are narrated by the Chinese writer Wu Ch' Eng-En of Huai-an in Kiangsu — which is 'unique in its combination of beauty' and compounded of 'folklore, allegory, religion, history, anti-bureaucratic satire and pure poetry' (Cf. *Monkey* — edited by Arthur Waley). While the Tripīṭaka is symbolical with the ordinary man, who is perplexed with the problems and toils of life, the monkey stands for that restless instability of genius.[2]

In sloka 32 of Canto II of the Bâlakâṇḍa in the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, it is narrated that the celestials assumed the form of monkeys, well-armed with branches of trees and boulders of rock as their missiles, for rendering assistance to Hari in his incarnation as Rama.

devāsca sarve harirūpadhāriṇaḥ
sthitāḥ sahāyārthamitastato hareḥ.
mahābalāḥ parvatavṛkṣa yodhinaḥ
pratīkṣamāṇā bhagavantamīśvaram.

(II)

Of the characters other than the hero and the heroine appearing in the great epic of Vālmīki, the one that attracts great admiration and love from the reader for his valiant deeds and exploits is perhaps Hanuman, who is the minister of Sugrīva, the ruler of Kiṣkindha. Stories from the Puranas relate that Hanuman was born of Rudrāṁśa, the atmospheric form of Śiva or Īśāna (one of the Vàsus or guardians of the eight quarters). The Śiva Puraṇa tells us that the lustre of Śiva was carried by the winds and deposited in the ears of Añjana (an *apsara* damsel), who was born as a monkey under the spell of a curse and who became united with the monkey chieftain Kesari. This resulted in the birth of Āñjaneya, which epithet rather reminds us of the share of the mother to that educative heroism.

The first impression that we gather of Hanuman is on the occasion of his meeting the princes Rama and Lakshmana, while in exile in the Pampa *kṣetra*. On seeing these princes, Hanuman jumps off from the crest of the Ṛshyamukha hillock. He casts off his monkey form, meets the brothers in the garb of a brāhmana. He introduces himself as a minister of Sugrīva, on whose behest, he institutes enquiries. The speech of Hanuman is faultless and with good accentuation. Rama remarks that even persons who are proficient in the three Vedas cannot command such eloquence as persons of the like of Hanuman, who convey messages or minister to the needs of their masters. With persons of his type, it was beyond doubt that the mission entrusted to them could always bring forth fruitful results (success). Lakshmana observes that Hanuman always speaks straight forward and is full of wisdom.

When search parties were sent in all directions for tracing out the whereabouts of Sita, it fell to the lot of Hanuman to take up the lead in crossing the sea. The aged bear chieftain Jāmbavan, who pleads his inability describes the traits of Hanuman in canto 66 of Kiṣkindhakāṇḍa (Vālmīki) thus: "Just as the eagle is the elite among all birds by virtue of its wings, among Vānaras you are noted for muscular strength. No one can equal you in prowess, velocity (speed), vigour, intelligence, sharpness and virility." In view of his parentage being associated with the Spirit of Atmosphere, he is styled Māruti.

[2] The flickering or unsteady mind is generally compared to the monkey.

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According to a story narrated by Jāmbavan, Hanuman while yet a child, on seeing the rising sun, presumed it to be a fruit. So, he made an attempt to seize it, when Indra gave him a blow with his thunderbolt, resulting in the compression of his left chin, by which incident he was styled Hanuman. The god of wind who was upset by this act on the part of Indra refuses to carry the breeze to the three worlds. The panic stricken celestials approached the Grandsire, who confers boons on Hanuman, such as spontaneous movement, longevity, choice of death at his own free will, extraordinary strength and prowess and pacifies the wind god. By the help of these boons he made himself immensely useful, on several critical occasions, to Rama, who was to him the very idol of his heart.

The qualities of this hero are summed up in sloka 82, Canto 128 of the Yuddhakāṇḍa. Rama gave Sita a jewelled necklace glittering like the moon beams strung with the choicest pearls. Sita chose to give away the pearl necklace to Hanuman as a souvenir in recognition of his services on several critical situations.[3] Knowing her wishes Rama said approvingly 'O lady, give away the necklace to the person with whom you are pleased.' Hanuman's attainments were such that it made him the fittest person to deserve such a present.

He is always identified with splendour, by virtue of his Brahmacharya or continence. He had in him the self-command which rendered him capable of handling situations with dexterity, by which he attained renown. He is a byword for statesmanship, as we see from his behaviour in the court of Ravana. His prodigious strength and talents could be judged at the time of crossing the seas to convey the message of Rama to Sita and the bringing of the medicinal plants at a time when the two brothers Rama and Lakshmana were in a swoon due to the poisoned missiles of the enemy. His meeting at the nick of time with Bharata, who had resolved to give up his life after the lapse of the fourteen years' limit stipulated for Rama's exile, is also an instance in point of Hanuman's rising to the occasion.

(III)

The episode relating to the meeting of Hanuman with Bhima is contained in the Vanaparva of the great epic *Mahābhārata* (Ch. 147-151). Bhima while in exile with his brothers sets out in quest of the *Saugandhika* flower at the request of Draupadi. Hanuman obstructs his path by stretching his body when a conversation ensues between them. The monkey chieftain pretends to be sedate and senile with a view to test the prowess of Bhimasena. When Bhimasena asks Hanuman to make way for him, he replies that he is in anguish due to disease and old age and if he was in a hurry, he could cross over his body. Bhima is enraged at this juncture and says that even after knowing that the Supreme Spirit pervades all bodies, he would not stoop to dishonour the Omniscient Absolute by crossing the body as if it were a hillock or an ocean in the manner Hanuman did. Hanuman wants to know from Bhima as to who Hanuman was and what his exploits were. Bhima describes the qualities of his venerable brother, who is endowed with laudable traits, talent, perception, inborn disposition and vigour, and adds that he is celebrated in the *Ramayana*. He adds that in all respects, he is a replica of his brother (in heroism, combat and competency to curb down enemies).

'Bhrātā mama guṇaślāghyo buddhisattvabalānvitaḥ.
rāmāyaṇeti vikhyātaḥ śrimān vānarapuṇgavaḥ.
sa me bhrātā mahāvīryastulyo aham tasya tejasā
bale parākrame yuddhe śakto aham tava nigrahe.'

(Ch. CILVII-Slokas 11, 13)

[3] *tejodhṛtiryaśo dākṣyam sāmarthyam vinayo nayaḥ.*
pauruṣam vikramo buddhiryasminnetāni nityadā.
hanumānstena hāreṇa suśubhe vānararṣabhaḥ. Canto 128, sl. 82-83.

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Hanuman does not move from his position, but asks Bhima to just lift up his tail and make way for himself. This causes the valiant Bhima to lose his patience and when he applies all his strength to lift up the tail, he feels unable to move it. In humiliation, he bows to Āñjaneya and asks for his credentials (whether he is a *siddha* or a *gandharva* or a *deva*). Then Hanuman gives Bhima an account of the *Ramayana* in brief and at the request of Bhima, he exhibits his massive form which he had assumed at the time of crossing the ocean. The monkey chieftain embraces Bhima and asks him if he wants any favour. Bhima says 'With you as our heroic leader and master and by dint of your martial lustre, we, the Pandavas will be ensured of gaining the desired end.'

sanāthāḥ pāṇḍavāḥ sarve tvayā nāthena vīryavān.
tavaiva tejasā sarvān vijayeṣyāmo vayam varān.

At the time of parting, Hanuman tells Bhimasena: 'When you utter in battle, your war cry resembling the lion's roar, I will then enhance it by my own cry which would be so fierce and frightful that it will very easily carry away the lives of your foes.'

(IV)

In *Vāsiṣṭa Ramayana,* there is a description of the return journey of Rama to Ayodhya. On his way, he had a Śivalinga consecrated on the seashore, with a view to ward off the sins accrued by the massacre of the innumerable Rakṣasas. Hanuman also brings a Śivalinga for the purpose, which was given due honour by Rama.

In Canto I of the Bālakāṇḍa (*Adhyātma Ramayana*), Sita is given directions to initiate Hanuman in the knowledge of the Infinite, when he was standing with folded hands in supplication as a mark of respect and humility. Hanuman was in turn eager to receive the instruction (exposition) (slokas 30-52).

In Chapter CVIII of the Uttara Kāṇḍa, Rama gives his final message to Hanuman: 'Be prepared to remain here in this world, do not let this decision of mine be in vain. Oh! monkey chieftain, as long as the stories connected with my life are narrated or are current in this world, may you choose to roam about from place to place keeping my word unsullied.' Hanuman replies: 'Till such time as the sacred stories of your life are current in this world, will I be on this earth, carrying out your commands.'

'yāvattava kathā loke vicariṣyati pāvanī
tāvat sthāsyāmi medinyām tavājñāmanupālayan.'

It is believed that even today wherever the stories connected with the life of Rama are narrated or discoursed upon, Hanuman will invariably be present. In the story of that great Vaishnava saint Goswamy Tulsidas, it is said that he found Hanuman, sitting incognito in the gathering where he was reciting his Ramayana and with his help was able to have the darshan (vision) of Rama. Hanuman acted as his guru. Hanuman is considered to be one of the Chiranjivins.

In the *Muktikopaniṣad* Hanuman discusses with Rama the means by which one could attain release from bondage. He puts forth questions to Rama (*iyaṁ kaivalya muktistu kenopāyena siddhyati*). In answer, Rama says '*Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* alone is quite enough for those who are keen to obtain release. But if then knowledge is not obtained, study the ten Upaniṣads, by the acquisition of the knowledge of which, you will enter into the realms of Rama. If steadfastness is not attained even by this knowledge, learn the thirty-two Upaniṣads. If you have a longing to obtain release from the body study the one hundred eight.'

Hanuman dedicated himself to the service of Rama (*Dāsya bhāva*) which is one of the nine modes of worship of God as laid down in the *Bhāgavata* (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pādasevanam arcanam vandanam dāsyam sakhyam ātmanivedanam*). He realized the Truth and gave expression to his experiences as seen from Hanuman Nataka.

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dehabuddhyā dāso asmi jīva buddhyā tvadamśakaḥ.
ātmabuddhyā tvamevāham iti me niścitā matiḥ.

'When I think myself as the body, I consider myself Thy servant; when I think myself as the Jīva, I am part of Thee; and when I think myself as the Ātman, the Self, You are myself. This is my firm conviction.'

In the words of that great master and savant Swami Vivekananda, 'on the one hand, Hanuman represents the ideal of service, on the other, he represents leonine courage, striking the whole world with awe. He has not the least hesitation in sacrificing his life for the good of Rama. A supreme indifference to every thing except the service of Rama, even to the attainment of the status of Brahma and Śiva — the great world gods. Only the carrying of Rama's behest is the one vow of his life'.

(V)

Iconography: The Sudarśana Samhita gives us a description of the five faced Āñjaneya, with ten hands. In four of the five right hands are held, a sword, a *khatvānga*, a goad and a tree. On the left side are held the trident, noose, mountain, *gomudrika* and a head (perhaps of a fiend). This aspect of Āñjaneya (Pancamukha) is represented as possessing five heads: boar, lion, monkey, eagle and horse perhaps indicating the five *avatars* of Vishnu: Varāha, Nārasimha, Rama, Krishna and Hayagriva.

The Umamahesvara Samhita gives particulars of the Caturbhuja Āñjaneya, holding a goad and *abhayamudra* (assurance) in the right hands, a noose and a *tanka* in the left. Another type described in the Sudarsana Samhita is styled Pratāpa. This figure is seated as a Yogin with Yogapaṭṭa. A rosary is held in the right and *vyākhya* or *cinmudra* (expository mood) is indicated in the left hand. The Śaivagama depicts Hanuman as lifting the mountain *Dhrona*. In the *dhyāna slokas* of the Mantra Śāstra, Hanuman is described as crystal white with brilliance as of gold and with the two hands folded in supplication and wearing rings in his two ears.

sphāṭikābham svarṇakāntim dvibhujam ca kṛtāñjalim.
kuṇḍaladvayasamśobhi mukhāmbujamaham bhaje

A picture of Hanuman holding mount Drona placed in the Salar Jung Museum at Hyderabad is traced out by scholars as coming from Iran. It is said that among the collections made in an excavation site (about twenty miles to the south) near Mecca, one of the finds was a stone icon of Hanuman.

The provincial types of coins of the Vijayanagar rulers include also coins bearing on the obverse the figure of Hanuman holding the mountain.[4] The gold coins struck by the rulers of the Kalachurya dynasty also bear on them the figure of Hanuman. The figure of Hanuman served as one of the insignias of the rulers of Vijayanagar and Mysore.

[4] Mysore Archaeological Report — 1929.

You have now to make the character of Mahavira your ideal. See how at the command of Ramachandra he crossed the ocean. He had no care for life or death! He was a perfect master of his senses and wonderfully sagacious. You have now to build your life on this great ideal of personal service. Through that, all the other ideals will gradually manifest in life. Obedience to the Guru without questioning, and strict observance of Brahmacharya — this is the secret of success. As on the one hand Hanuman represents the ideal of service, so on the other he represents leonine courage, striking the whole world with awe.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

'Questions and Answers' by Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, the late President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, is notes of a class talk delivered on Sunday, July, 1964, when the Swami had paid a visit to Madras. His answers to the most crucial problems in spiritual life, we hope, will be of great help to all spiritual aspirants.

Dr. K. C. Varadachari is Vivekananda Professor of Comparative Religion, University of Madras. His article 'Vedanta' is the text of his Pratap Seth's annual lecture delivered at the Indian Philosophical Congress 1965.

Prof. M. K. Venkatarama Iyer is a retired Professor of Philosophy of the Annamalai University and has been contributing to the *Vedanta Kesari* for some years now.

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta is Reader in Philosophy in the Patna University.

The article 'Modern Science and Ancient Concept of Reality' by Prof. T. R. Seshadri, Department of Chemistry, Delhi University, is a gist of a talk given by him in the Vishva Hindu Dharma Sammelan held recently in Delhi.

Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma, M.A., an Indologist, is an official in the Palace of the Maharaja of Mysore.

IS T.V. SERVICE A NECESSITY FOR INDIA AT PRESENT?

At the risk of being pointed out as backdated we have to discuss whether the recommendation for a T.V. service is to be seriously taken up for the time being in India. In a news item in the *Hindu* dated 22nd February, 1966, we have a summary of recommendations of the Committee on Broadcasting and Information Media headed by Mr. A. K. Chanda.

'The Committee has suggested that in about seven years, television service should be provided to all towns with a population of one lakh or over. On that basis, 113 towns in an area of approximately 5.73 lakh sq. miles, or 40 per cent of the total area of the country including 2½ lakh villages, would be covered. That would provide for 16 studio centres with the required number of auxiliary centres and micro-wave linkage,' says the report. We ask, who benefits by this T.V.? Does the common man gain anything? If so, what is his gain? We speak of the 'magic persuasiveness of visual presentation'. Has he got the education to benefit by these technical advances? What is the pressing problem now? There have been riots in two States recently.. Is it for T.V.? Have we been able to solve the problem of food that we can go in for this luxury? It is a luxury that India cannot afford at present whatever the protagonists may say in its support.

The magic words that are always put forward to catch the imagination of the people appear to be the 'social transformation, eradicating illiteracy' and so on. Can social transformation be brought about by machines? Is our country so sparsely populated as to require the medium of T.V. to spread education? What will happen to the millions of teachers that are earning their livelihood by that profession? Further, what is the social transformation that is envisaged? Even after seventeen years in which the professed aim of the party in power was socialism the goal is as far away as ever. Capital has still its tremendous weight with the Government. And is social life of a country like India to be measured by the improvement of and amenities available in a few towns? Moreover we have not been able to solve even the electricity problem in a state like Madras. The 'sword of Damocles' hangs on its head perpetually. Every year sometime or other a cut is enforced in the consumption of electric power.

Now regarding the foreign exchange to

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finance the scheme, 'the committee thinks the foreign exchange requirements of manufacturing television sets and other essential equipments would be provided by the foreign associates, the inducement being that they would themselves supply the television sets until manufacturing plants had been established but without an appreciable outflow of foreign exchange.' Why should India, which is already dependent on foreign countries for so many of its projects and finds itself unable to find sufficient finance to support them, take one more burden? We have had the painful duty to comment some time back on the sorry state in which the affairs of the Fertiliser Corporation were handled. What we want is not T.V. but men, men sincere to the backbone ready to sacrifice all self-interest for the sake of the country. The measure of sacrifice that we noticed in our armed forces in the recent conflict with our neighbour was exemplary. May not this example be followed in our normal life as well? If that is achieved that will be real social transformation, that will be real education. To understand another's needs and the will to meet them as far as they lie in one's power is the true test of education and not mere literacy. What has mere literacy, without this basic idea being not construed and inculcated, done is to make the students indisciplined and to evade serious study. This does not mean that we decry the literacy drive. Far from it. What we mean to say is that we have sadly missed the fundamentals of education and have gone on to build the superstructures on uncertain ground.

We should now at least begin to think of the nation as a whole and not of a handful of cities and towns and their residents. If we do not do this but increase the attractions of the city by things like T.V. the farmers will no longer want to work in the fields in the villages but migrate to the towns, as is already happening and make us perpetual dependents even for food on foreign countries. Will the thinking men and women cogitate over these problems without bias or being involved in because of vested interest? On that depends the test of the progress made by India towards the socialistic ideal.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PRESIDENT RADHAKRISHNAN'S SPEECHES AND WRITINGS. Publications Division, Govment of India. Pp. 459. Price: Rs. 9.50.

Consisting of the speeches and writings — lectures, messages, prefaces, appreciations etc. — of Dr. Radhakrishnan during the years 1962 May to 1964 May, this collection provides a most interesting fare of enlightenment, humour and satire with the whole world as the audience. Everywhere the President emphasizes the high values of Harmony, Unity and Peace and calls for collaboration from one and all in the endeavour. The human touch he imparts to his treatment of men and things is enjoyable. Speaking of the Soviet Union, for example, he observes: I tell you that the criticism which we hurl against the Soviet system are known to them. Mr. Khrushchev declared to an Oxford audience: 'When I went to a kolkhoz and asked a student who wrote *Anna Karenina*, the boy with trepidation said, "I did not write it." I took hold of the MVD man and asked him, "How is it you are mishandling your job?" The next day the MVD man came and said that the student had admitted that he had written the book! When a man laughs at himself there is a great deal of hope.'

M. P. PANDIT.

CONFUCIUS: Edited and Translated by Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai. Publishers: University Books, New Hyde Park, New York. Pp. 384. Price: $6.50.

Questioned about the realm beyond life, Confucius replied: "If you do not know life how can you know about death?" Asked about humanity and the gods, he said: If you are not able to serve men, how can you worship the gods?

That is the old master who held China in the hollow of his capacious hands for centuries. He was essentially a humanist whose first concern was to integrate man the individual, man the social being and man the son of God into a harmonious whole. The keynote of his writings (rather his recorded utterances) and those of his leading disciples like Mencius, Hsun Tzu — which are given in their English renderings in this readable volume — is the culturing of the *noble man*. The process is five-fold: humanism, love towards fellow-men, correct conduct in individual relations, conformity to social standards and traditions, wisdom and sincerity. Man first establishes harmony within himself, extends it to the family, then to the community, and lastly to the race.

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The dialogues, anecdotes and narrations recorded in these pages make an interesting reading. We may be permitted to ask: Confucianism may well have held sway in China for 25 centuries, but what of the future? How is it going to fare in the present context of communism? The editor Mr. Ch'u Chai answers 'The significance of Confucianism lies in its power of adaptation. It has been constantly reborn and reorientated. There may still be hope that the best in Confucianism will find its place in a new cultural synthesis, thus saving it from exhaustion. In it there is at least a measure of truth, and philosophical truth remains for ever.' We like to agree.

M. P. PANDIT

THE INDIAN EXPERIMENT: Director, Publications Division, New Delhi-6. Pp. 35. Price: 0.50 P.

This is a reproduction of talks broadcast on the Radio on Democratic Planning, Mixed Economy, Co-operative Commonwealth, Panchayat Raj and Land Reform. They reveal a penetrating grasp of the respective subjects, and afford valuable basic material for further studies and research.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

BORN TO SERVE: By J. P. Vaswani. Pp. 121. Price: Re. 1. Gita Publishing House, 10, Sadhu Vaswani Path, Poona-1.

This attractively got-up brochure presents the many facts surrounding the personality of Sadhu T. L. Vaswani as seen by his illustrious disciples and admirers. He is essentially a man of God; he combined the rigorous discipline of an ascetic with fellow feeling and a heart overflowing with pity to the distressed and oppressed. That he should have found much in common with Gandhiji was perhaps inevitable.

In truth he has the "heart of Mira" and the "emotion of Kabir" (P. 89), and he loves both man and bird and beast (P. 128). Going through the pages of this wonderful compilation, which contains in addition, copious extracts from the Sadhu's sayings, one feels with Dr C. Nimmo that 'India will live as long as there are born saints and seers like Vaswani' (P. 86).

S. RAJAGOPALAN

TOWARD ENLIGHTENED LIFE: By Swami P. Parampanthi. Pp. 205. Price: Rs. 5. Viraj, Dibrugarh, Assam, India.

This publication is of outstanding value and utility. It has grown out of the lectures delivered by the author in America, Mexico and Japan. An avowed Advaitin, he had mastered the tenets of all the schools of mysticism and philosophy both Eastern and Western, and has been able to discover the 'illumined points of unity' of them all with Vedanta.

The book is divided into two parts. The first contains a comparative estimate of the Christian, Zen and Vedanta fundamentals, the philosophy of J. Krishnamurthi and the Buddhistic concept of Nirvana. His delineation of Atman in p. 33 and p. 34 is picturesque and refreshingly sound (p. 53).

The author believes that certain disciplines are necessary for man's full development in every sphere of life. Part two deals with the methods of meditation. The preliminaries are set out at p. 88, 89 and 90, and these are really invaluable to all aspirants. The benefits of meditation are described at p. 96 and 97, and the author is positive that it enables man to 'discover within himself inexhaustible resources'.

The whole of this part contains innumerable passages of infinite wisdom, which have to be read, marked and inwardly digested. The "gift" of religious life, the author says, is "radiance". A radiant being is a "presence"; "he is without bitterness, selfless in love and compassion, unifying in his vision of Man and God, home and temple, the secular and the spritual. He is truly the son of immortality" (p. 201).

S. RAJAGOPALAN

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS MESSAGE: By Swami Tejasananda. Pub. Ramakrishna Mission Saradapith, Belur Math, Howrah Dt. Pp. 209. Price Rs. 5.

The book under review was first published as an article in the *Swami Vivekananda Centenary Volume* in 1963 and is now published separately so that it may be within the means of most of the reading public.

The birth of Swami Vivekananda, as the author has pointed out, was a need of the times. It was at a period of upheaval in the moral, social and religious life of India, that Swami Vivekananda was born. How he was equipped even from his infancy to face the task that awaited him later on; how his nature pure from birth but penetrative in the extreme was just the proper one to countenance the scientific probing and searching examination of his time; how the meeting of the ancient and the modern systems, represented by Sri Ramakrishna and Narendranath, led to a rethinking of man's approach to life; how his iteneracy as the monk helped him to view India as it existed, from close quarters; how his mission to the West set a new wave of thinking and mutual understanding; how India which was slumbering like a leviathan was forced to wake up; his work in America and the many other facets of that great life have all been described in brief in a flowing narrative, lucid in style and impressive in presentation. The Swami's message has been weaved into the life making it explicit that his life and message were one in purpose and content.

The get up of the book is elegant, and the printing is neat. Altogether it is a valuable addition to the Ramakrishna Vivekananda literature.

SANSKRIT

KRIDANTARUPAMALA (A concordance of verbal derivatives): By Pt. S. Ramasubba Sastrigal. Pub. Sanskrit Education Society, Madras-4. Price: Rs. 10.

The richness of the Sanskrit language lies — among others — in the large number of deductions and conjugations and derived forms from a set number of basic roots. There are over 2,000 roots listed in the famous Dhatupatha and there are a large number of *kridanta* forms for each of these. This book — the first of the series planned by the Sanskrit Education Society —

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takes up 250 verbs (in alphabetical order) and the *kridanta* forms of each of them are given, together with information of their group number (in the Dhatupatha), transitive or intransitive nature etc. Citations are given wherever necessary. The work is a commendable venture and we await the further volumes under preparation. The learned author has our grateful congratulations.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI (BIHAR)

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1964-65

The Ramakrishna Mission Tuberculosis Sanatorium has 214 beds in the General Wards, 13 in cottages and 13 in cabins; of these 32 beds are free and some are maintained at concession rates.

The Sanatorium has 4 X-ray machines including one of 500 m.a. having Tomograph attachment. The Operation Theatre and the Recovery Room of the Sanatorium are air-conditioned. There is a library with books on medicine.

There is a Recreation Hall with a stage and auditorium capable of accommodating 300 people. Dramas are staged, films screened and other functions organised for the entertainment of the patients and other inmates. Radio music and news are relayed from the Recreation Hall to the patients through the loud speakers installed in the wards. Patients have a library of their own containing books in various languages. Periodicals and newspapers are supplied to them. Annual sports are held and prizes awarded to the winners. There is also a library for the use of the members of the staff.

During the year under review 533 patients were treated in the Sanatorium, of which 317 were admitted during the year. 321 patients were discharged and on 31st March 1965 there were 212 patients under treatment.

105 operations were performed during the year which included 5 pneumonectomy, 2 lobectomy, 76 thoracoplasty and 3 thoracoscopy. 89 patients were treated free of all charges and 19 patients at concession rates.

In the out-patients department 388 tuberculosis patients and 936 suffering from other diseases were treated.

There is an After-care Colony at the Sanatorium where 40 ex-patients were accommodated. Of these 15 were given training in the Tailoring Department under a Master Tailor, who is also an ex-patient of the Sanatorium; 7 were taught type-writing; 5 were employed in the office, 1 in the X-ray Department, 3 in the Laboratory, 3 in the Medical Store, 3 in the Electric and Water Supply Department and 1 in the Poultry Farm. 5 ex-patients worked as nurses in the wards. One ex-patient runs a shop inside the Sanatorium. 2 ex-patients helped the Mission in their work in the Wards and Patients' Library.

There is also a free Homoeopathic Dispensary where 4,742 new and 6,952 old cases were treated during the year.

NEEDS OF THE SANATORIUM

1. Endowment for free beds at Rs. 30,000 per bed. The Mission has been trying all these years to treat as many poor patients as possible free of all charges. But the cost of treating the tuberculosis patients is so high, and the number of poor people coming to the Sanatorium for free treatment is so great, that they have not been able to tackle the problem successfully with the funds at their disposal.

2. After-care and Rehabilitation Centre: Rs. 10,00,000. After-care combined with re-habilitation is an essential aspect of anti-tuberculosis work. Ex-patients require careful attention and graded training for their physical, social and economic rehabilitation.

3. Incurable tuberculosis patients also require careful attention. If such patients are not segregated and well looked after, there is every possibility of their spreading infection. So, an endowment of Rs. 25,000 is necessary for the maintenance of one patient in the Infirmary.

4. Purchase of vehicle Rs. 30,000 is required as the existing pick-up van has become old.

5. To build-up the Dairy Rs. 50,000.

6. Rs. 1,00,000 is necessary for the compound wall round the hospital area for its security.

THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA (HOSPITAL), SHYAMALATAL, HIMALAYAS

REPORT FOR 1964-65

The Ramakrishna Sevashrama (a charitable hospital) at Shyamalatal (Himalayas) has completed the fiftieth year of its service. It caters to the needs of the people within a radius of 15 miles. It has 12 beds. During the period under review, 214 patients were treated in the indoor hospital. Of these 202 were cured and discharged and 10 left and 2 died. In the outdoor departmentment the total number of patients treated was 9,936 of which 7,239 were new cases. 742 injections were given to the patients during the period under review.

A Veterinary Department is also run under the auspices of the Sevashrama which treated 1,959 cases.

The Management extend their thanks and offer their best wishes to all their kind and generous donors, well-wishers, and friends who have helped and co-operated with them and appeal for funds for equipping the hospital with up-to-date medical appliances and to raise a permanent fund for its up-keep and general expenses.

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NEW PRESIDENT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

SRIMAT Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj has been unanimously elected President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He succeeds Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj who entered Mahasamadhi on the 6th October, 1965. The Board of Trustees had expected that Swami Yatiswaranandaji, the then Vice-President, who was ill at that time would recover and be able to take up this office. So they waited, but unfortunately it was not to be, as he too entered Mahasamadhi on the 27th January, 1966. During the interim period Swami Santanandaji, the oldest in years amongst the Trustees, officiated as President as per Swami Vivekananda's Trust Deed.

Swami Vireswaranandaji was born in 1892. After graduating from the Presidency College, Madras, he joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1916 at the age of 24. An initiated disciple of the Holy Mother he had his sannyasa in 1920 from Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. The Swami had the rare privilege of coming in contact with many other direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna as well.

He has served the Organisation in various important capacities. After assiduously working for some time at the Madras Math and for a number of years at the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati (Almora) as a member and as its Manager in the Calcutta Branch, he was made President of the Ashrama in 1927. In 1929 he became a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Mission and an Assistant Secretary of the Organisation in 1938. Deputed by the Headquarters the Swami went to the Varanasi Home of Service to reorganise its activities along with Swami Atmaprakashananda. He was in charge of the relief operation during the Bengal famine of 1943-45. Between April, 1949 and March, 1951 he assumed the General Secretaryship, during which period Swami Madhavanandaji retired temporarily from work on health grounds. Again in May, 1961 he became the General Secretary, which post he held till he was elected President of the Organisation.

His English version of the *Brahma Sutras* based on Śankara's Commentary and the translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* with the gloss of Sridhara Swami are proofs of his keen intelligence to grasp the inner meaning of the Scriptures.

VEDANTA KESARI

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

साङ्ख्यकाणादबौद्धाद्यैर्जगद्भेदो यथा यथा । उत्प्रेक्ष्यतेऽनेकयुक्त्या भवत्वेष तथा तथा ॥ १०० ॥

Sāṁkhya-Kāṇāda-Bauddādyaiḥ, by Sāmkhyās, Naiyayikas and Bauddhas; *jagadbhedhaḥ*, the differences in the things in the world; *yathāyathā*, in what all ways; *anekayuktyā*, by various arguments; *utprekṣyaté*, have been described; *tathā tathā*, in that same way; *eṣaḥ*, this (difference in the universe); *bhavatu*, let be (for us too).

100. The difference in the universe during the state of commerce with it are accepted by a man of knowledge in that same way as they are described in the various arguments by the Saṁkhyas, Naiyāyikas and Bauddhas.

अवज्ञातं सदद्वैतं निश्शङ्कैरन्यवादिभिः । एवं का क्षतिरस्माकं तदद्वैतमवजानताम् ॥ १०१ ॥

Niśśaṅkaiḥ, with confidence; *anyavādibhiḥ*, by other philosophers; *sadadvaitaṁ*, Reality, which is One without a second; *avajñātaṁ*, has been despised; (*iti cet*, if it is said). *Evaṁ*; in this way (by the evidence of the scriptures, logical reasoning, and experience); *taddvaitaṁ*, that duality (asserted by other philosophers); *avajānatāṁ*, those who have rejected; *asmākaṁ*, for us; *kā*, what; *kṣatiḥ*, harm is there?

101. If it is said that the Reality, which is One without a second, has with confidence been despised by other philosophers, to that we say: what harm can it do to us who have in this way (by the evidence of the scriptures, logical reasoning and inner experience) have rejected duality?

द्वैतावज्ञा सुस्थिता चेदद्वैते धीः स्थिरा भवेत् । स्थैर्ये तस्याः पुमानेष जीवन्मुक्तः इतीर्यते ॥१०२॥

Dvaitāvajñā, this despising of the duality; *susthitā cet*, if firmly taken root; *advaité*, in the secondless Reality (in Brahman); *dhī*, the intellect; *sthirā*, steady; *bhavet*, will be; *tasyāḥ*, of that (intellect); *sthairyé*, when stabi-

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lized ; *eṣaḥ*, this ; *pumān*, person ; *jīvanmukta iti*, as *jīvanmukta* (free while living in body) ; *īryate*, is said to be.

102. If the contempt for the duality (for the world) firmly takes root, the mind will be steady in the secondless Reality, in Brahman ; and when that stabilization of the mind takes place then the person is said to be a *Jīvanmukta*.

एषा ब्राह्मीस्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति। स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति॥ १०३॥

Pārtha, O son of Pṛthā (Arjuna) ; *eṣā*, this ; *brāhmīsthitiḥ*, is the state of Brahman ; *enāṁ*, this ; *prāpya*, attaining ; *na vimuhyati*, does not get deluded ; *antakāle 'pi*, even at the last moment of one's life ; *asyāṁ*, in this state ; *sthitvā*, being established ; *brahmanirvāṇaṁ*, emancipation ; *ṛcchati*, attains.

103. O Arjuna, this is the state of Brahman, attaining which no person gets deluded thereafter. Even at the time of death established in that he attains complete liberation.

NOTE : This sloka of the *Gita* has been quoted here to show that the benefit of Advaitic realization is not only *Jīvanmukti* but *videhamukti* also.

सदद्वैतेऽनृते द्वैते यदन्योन्यैक्यवीक्षणम्। तस्यान्तकालस्तद्भेदबुद्धिरेव न चेतरः ॥ १०४ ॥

Sadadvaité, in the non-dual Real, Brahman ; *anṛte dvaité*, in the unreal world ; *yat*, what; *anyonyaikyavīkṣaṇaṁ*, knowledge of identity due to superimposition of one on the other ; *tasya*, of this delusion ; *antakālaḥ*, the last moment ; *tadbhedabuddhireva*, (is) only the knowledge of difference between them (the real and the unreal) ; *na ca itaraḥ*, and not any other.

104. The last moment of the delusion of the knowledge of identity, between the real Brahman and the unreal world which occurs due to superimposition, is only that moment when this knowledge of difference between them is realized and not any other.

NOTE : When we see Brahman as real and the world as illusory that moment is the last moment of delusion — this is the purport of this verse.

यद्वाऽन्तकालः प्राणस्य वियोगोऽस्तु प्रसिद्धितः। तस्मिन्कालेऽपि न भ्रान्तेर्गतायाः पुनरागमः ॥ १०५ ॥

Yadvā, or ; *prasiddhitaḥ*, as generally known in the world ; *prāṇasya*, of the vital force ; *viyogaṁ*, separation ; *antakālaḥ*, the last moment ; *astu*, let it be ; *tasminkāle 'pi*, even at that time ; *gatāyāḥ*, of the far removed ; *bhrānteḥ*, delusion ; *punaḥ*, again ; *āgamaḥ*, return ; *na*, is not.

105. Or as is generally known in the world, the last moment is the moment of separation of the vital force from the body. Let it be so. Even at that time there is no return of the delusion which has been removed (by the realization of Reality).

नीरोग उपविष्टो वा रुग्णो वा विलुठन् भुवि। मूर्छितो वा त्यजत्वेष प्राणान् भ्रान्तिर्न सर्वथा ॥ १०६ ॥

Eṣaḥ, he (the person, who has no delusion of duality); *nīrogaḥ*, without disease; *upaviṣṭaḥ*, sitting; *rugṇo vā*, or attacked by disease; *bhuvi*, on the ground;

(*Continued on Page* 503)

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THE HUMAN MIND - ITS NATURE AND GOOD USE

THE most perplexing organism, to a thinking man, is his own mind. We have deliberately used the word 'thinking' here to indicate a definite class of people, who are not satisfied with the natural trend of events and of life. People, generally, are not interested in taking note of the working of their own minds. That is: how the mind works? How it reacts to situations? Is the reaction conducive or not to future tranquillity? and so on. They concern themselves with the fulfilling of their immediate needs, in attending to their daily necessities anyhow, without caring to see whether it hurts others or not. To live a happy life, as they consider it, is all they desire and do. Normally people act within the bounds of the letter of the laws of the land though they may not respect the spirit behind them. Sometimes they cross the limit, and by clever strategems escape the hand of justice. But cleverness is not wisdom. Wisdom is something different. Man may give the go-by to human laws sometimes but not his inherent ones. By clever manipulation he may evade the laws and amass money or enjoy other objects of the world but that will not give him peace of mind, because there will be lurking in his mind all the impressions (aroused or dormant) of the actions he has done.

The human mind is such a mechanism that it records everything that one takes interest in. For instance we may see many sights or meet a number of persons but the mind will record indelibly some scenes, some faces in which we get interested. Others are no more than vague, hazy, shadowy figures. Not only does the mind receive impressions but it stores them away. To borrow an expression of Swami Vivekananda, each impression is pigeon-holed and is revived or taken out for reference, as it were, when the experience is repeated, or when we meet again the person whom we had seen on a former occasion. And then we remember the experience or recall the person to our mind. This particular ability to recall an instance back to the mind is called memory. And memory forms one of the *vṛttis* of the *citta* (mindstuff)[1] according to the Indian psychologist Patanjali. It forms a part of the subconscious mind, if we are to speak in the language of the Western psychologists. We all know what a wonderful gift this memory is. Everyone has this faculty in smaller or greater measure. Without memory man would be a strange, pitiable being. As an illustration of this we can cite people who either due to great mental shocks or concussion of the brain in accidents suffer from amnesia permanently or for a time.

This subconscious mind plays a very great part in human life. Perhaps this statement may not be readily accepted by one and all. A little discussion may help to remove doubts regarding its veracity. We think we are acting consciously in the waking state. Very few do that. The majority of people are moved by their impulses, their habits and tendencies which are imbedded in the subconscious. We can observe our own minds to verify the phenomenon. In spite of our best efforts to the contrary we are forced to do certain actions which we know are harmful to our well-being — actions of which we in our saner moments are likely to regret, nay be ashamed of. And this will happen not once but repeatedly. And every time, perhaps, we may resolve that we would not be doing it again. But when the impulse comes, when the desire arises all our control slips away like water from a sieve.

Śri Krishna, with great pathos, says in the *Gītā*, 'As per one's nature even a man of

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[1] वृत्तयः पञ्चतय्य क्लिष्टा अक्लिष्टाः ।
प्रमाण विपर्यय विकल्पनिद्रा स्मृतयः ।
— *Yoga Sutras*, 5 & 6.

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knowledge acts. Creatures follow their own nature. What will mere prohibition do?'[2] Wise counsel has no effect at that time. Men do evil actions or think evil thoughts when they are wide awake, conscious of what they are doing, yet they do not do them with all their heart, a slight heartache persists, the pricking of the conscience remains. Remorse, regret and shame set in afterwards. Does this not show that people are mostly moved by their subconscious mind?

Further, how much of our life do we live in the present? Much of it is spent in ruminating over our past or planning for the future while the present slips by every moment. Well did Pascal, the French mathematician and philosopher, say: 'Let any man examine his thoughts, and he will find them ever occupied with the past or the future. We scarcely think at all of the present; or if we do, it is only to borrow the light which it gives for regulating the future. The present is never our object; the past and the present we use as means; the future only is our end. Thus, we never live, we only hope to live'.

Whatever may be the other implications of this saying of Pascal, it also conclusively brings forth the fact that the subconscious has no mean contribution to make in the shaping of man's life and character, and hence cannot be overlooked, neglected. In fact the psychoanalysts have more to do with the subconscious mind of their patients than the conscious. They have somehow to ferret out the causes of the nervous tensions of the patients in order to know what suggestions they can make for their removal.

II

It is important to note here, at this stage, that every thought, word or act of man goes to form his tendencies, impressions, *samskāra*, in the subconscious. Man comes into this world with a load of *samskāras*. As Swami Vivekananda categorically points out, a child does not come into this world with what some of the earlier Western philosophers called the *tabula rasa*, a blank slate. 'Such a child,' he continues, 'would never attain to any degree of intellectual power, because he would have nothing to which to refer his new experiences. We see that the power of acquiring knowledge varies in each individual, and this shows that each one of us has come with his own fund of knowledge.' Another reason that Swamiji adduces to the existence of these impressions is that 'knowledge can only be got in one way, the way of experience; there is no other way to know. If we have not experienced it in this life, we must have experienced it in other lives'. He then proceeds to cite the example of the fear of death which is everywhere: 'A little chicken is just out of an egg and an eagle comes, and the chicken flies in fear to its mother'. It had had that experience in the past. So also with other feelings. A young one of a duck though hatched by a hen runs into water as soon as it gets near a pond. Each one of us has many such imprints in our mind and it is the sum total of these impressions that forms man's nature, *prakṛti*.

We have now a fair idea why it is so important to control our thoughts, speech and actions. For they are going to shape our future. As a poet sings:

> Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
> Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

Like shadow the impressions of past acts will stalk us all our life and there is no escape from them. That being so we have to be cautious in our acts. We now know how formidable is the task set for us to fit ourselves to a religious life. But there is a silver lining to the dark clouds. If the tendencies with which a person is born are good and the environment provided for his growth is conducive to spiritual well-being the momentum of these tendencies will carry him a long way and a little exertion will meet with great success. But this fortune, good luck is given to a few. Others have to earn everything by the sweat of their brow. We are speaking

[2] सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥
—*Gita*, III. 33.

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here in the language of the worldly man. For in fact, as Swami Vivekananda remarks, 'No one can get any thing unless he earns it. We are responsible for what we are'. If, therefore, we see disparity in the world we should remember that it is not due to any whimsical fiat of Providence but due to the earned merit or demerit of the beings that the differences are there.

What then about the rest of us? We have somehow gone wrong in our previous births. Is there no redemption? Is there no way out? These are the questions that will naturally come to one who is desirous of liberation. The Hindu scriptures never speak of eternal damnation. They say every one can reach the Highest provided he patiently and ceaselessly applies himself to the task. And it is here again that the subconscious comes into the picture. As we have already observed, man's character is the aggregate of the impressions he carries within him. There is no chemical or physical process by which we could wipe out all imprints of our past actions however much we may wish for it. They have gone and formed into brick or mortar in the edifice of our character. But we can build again, as Swamiji asserts, 'And what we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves'.

How can we remake ourselves? We have noticed what happens when we pay heed to the promptings of the pleasurable sensations. We are drawn back and again into their unsatiable vortex, and then our discriminative mind is, as it were, put on the rack. It is torn between the intention to restrain and the lure of the siren senses. But the more you let loose the reins of the senses the more will they draw you down into the mire. Yet those who have had enough of all these pleasures will turn to something that is non-transient, something that is real and eternal. And to them Sri Ramakrishna suggests prayer to God as a remedy to overcome their baser nature.

Let us find how prayer helps. We get attached to things when we constantly come in touch with them either physically or mentally. Sometimes in the physical world the faults and defects of the things we love are visible and are likely to destroy the image that we had projected about them. On the other hand, the mind can construe images, of what we like, more perfect, ideal, and blemishless, inducing man to involve himself deeper and deeper with the attractions. Now, when we pray to God, sincerely, not for the things of the world but to reveal Himself, our mind is taken off the object on which we dote. And as long as we pray the mind is flooded with the vibrations of the Divine. When this process is repeated constantly the mind naturally rests in God. By repeated practice one is able to inundate the mind with the consciousness of God. What happens is nothing extraordinary, nothing unusual. The mind which was being disturbed by various types of waves is now subjected to a vibration of a particular kind and then faithful to its duty it goes on recording the ripples until other imprints become stale and wane.

How to turn the naturally sense-bound mind towards God? Let us ask ourselves whether even a trial of practice is so difficult. Do we not lose our most loved relations and friends by estrangement or death, yet recover from the shocks? Do we not become cheerful after a time? We do. We make new friends, attach ourselves to something else and go on living. Likewise let us estrange ourselves from the senses which pose as friends and yet betray us; let us turn our mind towards God, who is our own. He is the innermost essence of our being. 'No one who believed in God has come to grief;' sings a poet-saint of South India, 'it is those who did not have faith in Him that were ruined.' Sri Ramakrishna says that God is like the wish-fulfilling tree. Whatever you ask for will be given to you. Why then should it be impossible to turn our mind towards Him, a little at least? In this instance alone do we have to consciously struggle. We are to undermine the baser inclinations, which have taken root in our subconscious. The mind should be trained to forget its old friends and cultivate new ones. The furrows that have been dug should be smothered by the newly ploughed ones.

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Pray to God a hundred and a thousand times mentally, and forcibly make the mind accept it and then the subconscious will take it up. Once that part of the mind absorbs a theme it goes on recording the idea all the unconscious hours of our time. Thus we create a new habit. This is remaking of man. Only those people who can remake themselves, live a man's life, others are much like the dumb-driven cattle, slaves to their nature.

It should not however be taken to mean that the mind will immediately yield as soon as we begin to pray. It would definitely put up a stubborn fight. But we should not despair. Śri Krishna advises Arjuna, 'As and when the fickle and unsteady mind wanders away should it be brought back repeatedly and placed under the control of the Ātman'.[3] Pascal, perhaps, had this struggle and assertion of the inner man in view when he made the statement about living, quoted earlier. How long should this struggle go on? 'Till one falls asleep and till one's last breath, should one pass one's days in the contemplation of Vedanta,'* says a sage. What has been said about Vedanta can be said of the other practices also. The practices may be trying but there is no shorter road to immortality and if we have manliness we must stick on. The assertion of the higher nature over the baser one, according to Śri Ramakrishna, is real manliness. Jesus said, 'For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'[4] Truly there is nothing which can be compared with the soul.

III

As in the case of prayer so also in the case of good actions the subconscious remoulds itself. Engaged in good acts the mind is forced to be occupied with good thoughts and as such keeps away, as far as possible, the lurking robbers (evil characteristics). But the way of motiveless action, the Karma Yoga is a difficult path. We may like to do unselfish action, make a good start too, but desire for results, in the last instance the desire for name and fame, somehow puts forth its stealthy shoot and in no time grows into a mighty banyan tree. That is the reason why it is expedient to have recourse to prayer and surrender to God along with the performance of unmotivated actions. Śri Śankara, with his far insight into the nature of things, had probably observed the drawbacks in the performance of mere rituals, when he declared, 'Karmas are for the purification of the mind and not for the attainment of the goal. Even millions of rituals without meditation on the Ātman can give us no peep into the Highest.'[5] We are apt to miss the point made out by Śri Śankara if we lay stress only on the second part of his statement. He has recognized the value and place of *karma*, in the purification of the mind, of sublimating the thoughts. Purity of mind is a great boon and if it is attained it is a great achievement. For a person of pure mind the goal is not far off.

When is the mind said to be pure? When there are no desires, no hankerings, no attachments whatsoever lurking in it and when it naturally rests in God. If we analyze the impurities of the mind — they are many — we shall be able to trace back their origin to one single feeling, desire. Arjuna asks this pertinent question of Śri Krishna: 'Impelled by what does man, though unwillingly, engage himself in wicked actions as if compelled by force?'[6] Śri Krishna's reply brings us to the same conclusion: 'This desire, this anger which is the product of *rajoguna*, is a vora-

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[3] यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥
— *Ibid.*, VI. 26.

*आसुसेरामृतेः कालं नयेद्वेदान्त चिन्तया ।

[4] Gospel according to St. Mathew, 16. 25.

[5] चित्तस्य शुद्धये कर्म नतु वस्तूपलब्धये ।
वस्तुसिद्धिर्विचारेण न किंचित्कर्मकोटिभिः ॥
— *Vivekachudamani*, 11.

[6] अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥
— *Gita*, III. 36.

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cious eater, and a great sinner. Know that to be the greatest enemy here (in this world)'.[7] It is a significant statement. Śri Śankara commenting on this sloka of the *Gītā* says : 'This desire, because of which there result every kind of misery, is the enemy of all. This desire of the creatures when obstructed results in anger and therefore anger also is only desire in another form'.[8] Every one of our passions, in the ultimate analysis we will find, has originated with this desire. Therefore, becoming desireless, not for a time or for a day, but for ever, is to be pure in mind. For a person of pure mind the light of the Ātman is ever present ; as such, action when done without motive, though not directly, leads us towards the Highest.

IV

The method of psychic control also indicates how the mind has much to do with our religious life. 'The mind alone, for man, is the cause for bondage and emancipation — the mind which is engrossed in sense objects makes for bondage whereas when it is not entangled in them takes us to *mokṣa*',[9] says one of the minor Upaniṣads.

From the foregoing we might have had some idea of the value of the mind. It is a great treasure. It now depends upon each person to what use he puts it. He may squander it away in false pursuits or utilize it in noble endeavours. Only he should keep in mind that his reward too will be according to his desert, that he will have to lie on the bed he has made.

No one can force anyone into any path, especially so into the right one. The utmost that can be done is to show the dangers underlying the journey on the wrong road and the peace that is awaiting on the right one and leave the choice to the pilgrim. That is what Śri Krishna said to Arjuna after teaching him the whole of the *Gītā*. 'I have taught you all this knowledge, which is subtler than the subtlest. Pondering deep over their meaning do as you wish.'[10] Let us too think whether we will give the mind free reins to move along the roads of the senses or turn it on the Ātman, on God. If we choose the latter course it will be the best use we will be making of it.

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[7] काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ।
— *Ibid.*, III. 37.

[8] काम एष सर्वलोकशत्रुर्यन्निमित्ता सर्वानर्थप्राप्तिः प्राणिनां स एष कामः प्रतिहतः केनचित्क्रोधेन परिणमते । अथ क्रोधोऽप्येष एव ।

[9] मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।
बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ।
— *Brahma Bindu Upanishad.*

[10] इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ।
— *Gita*, XVIII. 63.

PANCADAŚĪ — (*Continued from page* 498)

viluṭhan, though rolling ; *mūrchito vā*, or unconscious ; *prāṇān*, the vital forces ; *tyajatu*, let him give up ; *sarvathā*, in any way ; *bhrāntiḥ*, delusion (of duality); *na*, is not.

106. Let the person, who has no delusion of duality (a knower of Brahman), give up his vital forces sitting and without disease ; or rolling on the ground with pain, or even in the unconscious state, yet delusion will not overtake him again in any way whatsoever.

DOUBT : There may arise a doubt here : whether during the unconscious state of the last moment of life delusion may not recur again, as there will not be knowledge manifest at that time. That is being answered in the next verse.

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MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

WE do not exactly remember whether it was in 1906 or 1907 that Lātu Maharaj came to Kankurgachi along with the author (of this book) and Patalbabu to join in the celebration of Master's birthday. The nice little temple was just then completed. That day he came walking the whole distance from Balarambabu's house. Patalbabu insisted on hiring a carriage. Lātu Maharaj said, 'Why hire a carriage? It is just a short distance, let us walk and take Master's name. You will see we shall reach Kankurgachi in no time.' That day he had a long talk with Nityagopal Avadhut at Kankurgachi. While returning he said to the author of this work, 'Why are you pained when you see somebody not recognizing our Master? Let people have faith in anyone. In the beginning there are differences of opinion. At the end, of course, all sing the same tune, all differences vanish.'

In 1907 Girishbabu invited (Holy) Mother to Calcutta during the Durga Puja. She stayed at his house during the Puja days and then shifted to Balarambabu's house, where she stayed for a month. Vaikuntha Sanyal, a householder disciple of the Master writes: 'Entering through the main gate, when Holy Mother saw her pet son Lātu sitting in a room to the right side of the gate, she, out of affection, accosted him saying, "How do you do, my boy, Lātu?" at which Lātu Maharaj replied, almost as a reflex action, "You are a lady of rank, how are you addressing me, a man, near the main gate? Please enter the zenana at once. I am your servant eternally, you could have called me to the zenana; I would have presented myself there immediately. I would not talk to you here." Mother smiled, went upstairs and entered the zenana.'

As long as Mother stayed at Balarambabu's house she used to send her *prasada* to Lātu Maharaj. One day Lātu Maharaj said to a devotee, 'You see, Mother used to come and stay at Balarambabu's house. I used to be in that room near the gate at the outer courtyard. Many people would ask me often, "How is it, Maharaj, Mother is here and you never go to see her?" I would tell them, "What of that?" Very few would understand my sentiment. Many would be angry at those words and would use harsh words, even to my hearing. One day I snubbed them sharply, "These rogues will not do anything, will not practise *sādhana* in order to understand what Mother is, but will only go on saying, 'Holy Mother', 'Holy Mother', and make an exhibition of it. These fools try to make Mother a show-piece. I have nothing to do, rogues, with such Mother of yours."' Devotees naturally got hurt at these words. But when, later on, they came to know what it was to know and revere Mother they understood the situation. Lātu Maharaj later added, "To understand what (Holy) Mother is and to show proper respect to her is not a matter of joke. Just try to understand this one point in her life. Master, a Divine Incarnation, worshipped her and she could stand it and accept it. How many have the adequate *sādhana* to understood this unprecedented phenomenon? What Mother is was understoood by Master himself and, to a certain extent, by Swamiji (Vivekananda). To speak the least of her, she is Lakshmi herself. Tremendous spiritual practice is necessary to understand what she really is"'. (From the notes of Bibhutibhushan Maitra.)

When Mother was leaving Balarambabu's house for Jairambati the scene centering round

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Lātu Maharaj has been described beautifully by Sri Sannyal : 'Even then Lātu was absent-minded. One by one, all bowed down to the holy feet of the Mother. But Lātu was seen pacing up and down in his own room and saying to himself, "Sannyasin, to a Sannyasin who is mother, who is father? He is above Māyā." When Mother was on the staircase near Lātu's room and came too close, Lātu was still heard loudly repeating those words. Standing near the door of Lātu Maharaj's room, the moment Mother said, "Lātu dear, you need not recognize me", up jumped Lātu Maharaj and fell at her feet and bowed down to her, and rubbed his head at her feet bursting into tears. Seeing her favourite boy Lātu in tears, Mother too, could not restrain hers. Then with his upper garment in hand, Lātu Maharaj wiped her tears and in a choked voice said, "Don't, Mother, don't; don't shed tears, you are going to your father's house; you should not cry. Sharot (Saradananda) will bring you back here very soon, don't cry Mother, don't. While going to one's (father's) home one should not shed tears." These words, surcharged with such endearing emotion, overwhelmed us all. We remained fixed to the ground for some time.'

* * * *

In 1908 Kamapal Misra, a gentleman from Orissa came to Calcutta to appear for the B.L. Examination; he was staying at Balarambabu's house. He took philosophy as one of his subjects for B.A. and in discussion he was given to quoting from Herbert Spencer, Kant, Hegel, and others. One day there was a heated discussion between him and Balarambabu's son, Ramakrishna; both of them came downstairs to Lātu Maharaj for the solution of their problem. With the help of a couple of commonplace examples Lātu Maharaj gave a clear solution to the problem. This appealed to Sri Misra so much that he remained a devotee of Lātu Maharaj throughout his life.

To young collegians his usual advice was to look at the life of the saint-philosophers in order to arrive at a correct understanding of their philosophies. He would cite Śankaracharya as an example to the point. He would say, 'Look here. Śri Śankara founded his theory of Māyā; but nobody can understand properly what he meant by Māyā being *mithyā* unless he studies Śankara's life thoroughly. Had Māyā been really non-existent, as many pundits seem to say, and had this world been Māyā's creation then how are we to explain Śankara's conduct towards it — his writing so many hymns addressed to so many *devas* and *devis*, worshipping Viśwanatha and Annapurna, discovering the four great tirthas and establishing his four important Maths there. What he understood by Māyā remained unexpressed in language; but his conduct gave eloquent expression to it.' How did this illiterate *sādhu* come to this conclusion?

About Lord Buddha he would say: 'People say Buddha was an atheist. Why should he be so? One day a pundit came to him and started saying many things about God. Lord Buddha maintained silence all along. This gentleman interpreted his silence as his assent to atheism. This got currency. What he really meant by his silence is that neither of the two terms, "existence" and "non-existence", is adequate to a proper understanding of what we call God. And who can deny it?'

Talking of renunciation he would invariably cite Lord Buddha's example and say, 'You talk of renunciation? What have you given up? What did you have and what have you renounced that you take pride in it? Look at Lord Buddha. He was a real *tyāgin*, man of true renunciation. He was a prince, all kinds of enjoyment were his, unasked; but he gave them all up and came out — for what? Only to know the Truth. People by thousands die for titbits of happiness. He threw them all overboard, the best of them in abundance. Try to fathom this. The Devas came to him, with all kinds of temptation, when he was practising austerities. But he remained above all temptations. Do you know what he told his tempters, "Even before practising austerities I had kingship and kingdom. Am I to get these through austerities over again? I

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have not come away to practise austerities for kingdom and worldly pleasures, I have come away to know the Truth and Truth alone, and nothing else." And he got the Truth, the real God, so quickly.

'Lord Buddha had many occult powers; but he never used them for ordinary purposes. Had he but wished he could have revived the dead child brought to him by the bereaved mother. But no, he asked her to bring some sesame seeds from a house which had not known any bereavement. In vain did the poor mother walk from door to door to get the thing, she was sure enough would have brought her child back to life. Slowly did the truth (of the inevitability of death) dawn on her and she returned to the Buddha a calm and collected lady. Thus did he make people understand the truths indelibly; and never did he apply the supernatural powers he acquired through his great *tapasya*.'

* * * *

In January 1908 he came to know of a devotee's sudden fall and called him to his side. When he came to him at Balarambabu's house he said, 'Look here, my boy, if you have committed one or two mistakes in life you should not give up your spiritual practices and brood over the mistakes and be hopeless. Mistakes every one commits. Call on Him. He will give you power to overcome weakness. He will break the charm you are under. He is mercy itself; however great your sins might be His mercy cannot be permanently withdrawn from you. How little is your sin, and this has brought about so much depression in you! Just think of Ajāmila, Valmiki; compared to theirs your sin is not worth the name. Do you know what brother Vivekananda used to say? He said, "What is this stain of an ink-pot of sin? In His infinite ocean of mercy if one bathes the stain of such hundred ink-pots of sin would be washed away beyond recognition!" So I say, "Grieve not but redouble your *sādhana*, and don't be depressed." Do you remember that song of the Brāhmo-samaj: "Take away, Lord, my evil desires, fill me with good ones"? Pray to Him day and night, then this evil tendency of yours will soon be a thing of the past.'

The devotee was so ashamed of his conduct that he could not raise his head. Seeing this Lātu Maharaj said, "Before committing sin man's conscience fills him with shame, but man brushes aside that shame. But such is the Divine Law that after committing the sin it is the same shame that overwhelms him, he cannot raise his head before others." Even these words could not shake him off his shame. Lātu Maharaj continued, "Whom are you ashamed of, my boy? Whatever you have done has all been seen by the Lord, from Him you could not hide anything. When it is all known to Him why should you be so pensive over it any more? Rather engage yourself in harder *sādhana*, keep company of *sādhus*, and come here off and on." Hearing all this the devotee's strength revived and he engaged himself in *sādhana*. Thus Lātu Maharaj would instil hope and courage into drooping hearts and inspire them to greater *sādhana*.

* * * *

How deep was his feeling for the good of the householder devotees is best illustrated by the following incident. It took place in the house of a relative of Patalbabu. No one of the house, not even the master knew anything of Lātu Maharaj. He was known only to the mistress of the house. So, when on invitation Lātu Maharaj had gone to the house, people looked askance at him. Seeing his ochre cloth they took him to be an ordinary *sādhu* and did not allow him to sit in the same line with them but allotted a seat in a corner. They took no notice of whether all the dishes were served to him or not. Unmindful of all this, Lātu Maharaj took his meal gladly. When the lunch was almost over the mistress of the house came by chance to that place, and, seeing Lātu Maharaj seated in a neglected corner and naturally not served with the best dishes, was seized with great remorse. She started in the Bengali lady's fashion, 'Ah me! I am undone. What kind of a woman am I? I have invited my father to a lunch here and

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could not come and see for myself if he was properly received and served! Father must be angry with me and must not have taken his fill here.' Lātu Maharaj tried to console her. But more he tried, greater was her remorse. Lātu Maharaj said, 'No, mother, no. I was well served and I have taken my full meal and I am fully pleased.' But the lady's remorse was so great that she could not pardon herself. She continued, 'What a great transgression have I committed today? Inviting a *sādhu* to our house I have failed to attend to him properly. Ah, my transgression! Ah, my sin!' so on and so forth. Lātu Maharaj tried to comfort her, 'Why, mother, are you disturbed? You have not committed any sin. I have not taken it seriously. I tell you, nothing, no misfortune, will befall you or the family. I am perfectly satisfied with your conduct. Do not have any misgiving about it.' 'No, father, my conscience does not give me any peace,' said the lady, 'you do something, father, so that no evil will visit the family for this unpardonable transgression.' Then Lātu Maharaj washed his hands and sitting on the same spot he did *japa* for some four or five minutes for the good of the family. Then only was the mistress of the house rid of all misgivings. The incident is simple, but it shows the natural unassumingness of Lātu Maharaj and utter inability to see faults in others.

Another incident of his lack of egotism we shall narrate here. Once accompanied by a few devotees Lātu Maharaj went from Gaya to Varanasi. The abbot of Gaya showed great respect to him and requested him several times to accept their hospitality for a few days more; but Lātu Maharaj did not stay there for more than three days. When he reached Advaita Ashrama at Varanasi with seven or eight devotees he found that there was no room for so many — the building was not completed. Seeing so many persons come without notice the then President of the Advaita Ashrama found himself in a little embarrassing situation. Lātu Maharaj noticed it and did not allow the situation to deteriorate. He asked some of his devotees to make arrangement for cooking at a particular spot — he showed them the spot; asked some others to go to the Ganges to take bath, visit the temples of Viswanath and Annapurna and then to purchase raw food stuff and come as early as possible; and himself started preparing tea for the party. Then he sent another devotee to Bansi Datta's house to convey to the inmates the news of their arrival at the Advaita Ashrama. In the afternoon all shifted to Bansi Datta's house. The party did not give any cause for the slightest inconvenience to the inmates of the Ashrama.

A few of these devotees expressed that their welcome at the Advaita Ashrama lacked warmth. But Lātu Maharaj remarked, 'You see, you have come with a Sannyasin, and you should expect a Sannyasin's welcome. You cannot expect there the honour and respect shown to householders. Their code of conduct is different from that of Sannyasins. If a dozen people come to your house unexpectedly you feel embarrassed. Not so the *sādhus*. Why? *Sādhu* guests are accustomed to stay and sleep under the shade of trees; and they beg their food. So the question of inconvenience does not arise at all. It is the duty of the *sādhu* guests to see that they do not create any inconvenience to the inmates of the Math. The moment you understand that there might be some feeling of uneasiness you should come away at once. When you come to a Math or Ashrama your first look out should be not to disturb the even tenor of the place.'

* * * *

Lātu Maharaj had returned to Calcutta and was staying in his familiar room at Balarambabu's house. One day a gentleman (on inquiry found to be a Deputy Magistrate) came and asked Lātu Maharaj, 'How does a *sādhaka* "catch" (know) Brahman?' Lātu Maharaj: 'You have heard music. You must have noticed how a violinist cleverly catches a song in the strings of his instrument. To "catch" Brahman is like that.'

In 1908 the present author was at Belur Math on the occasion of the annual birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna. Some friends accompanied him there. When they came to

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Lātu Maharaj he asked, 'How much did you pay when you bowed down to the Master in the shrine?' The author told what he had paid. Next Lātu Maharaj asked 'What about your friends? How much did they pay?' When he heard that they had not paid anything he said with a smile, 'Oh! they send their mails by "bearing post".' The author did not quite understand the remark. When Lātu Maharaj explained it to him that it meant 'Practising piety without spending money,' there was laughter. In the course of reporting the celebration the author said that about five thousand people were fed that day. 'Just see,' said Lātu Maharaj, 'so many people were fed and most people did not pay anything. Without paying anything one should not partake of *prasada*. This is one of the reasons that you suffer. You commit a sin when you don't pay anything when visiting a temple or shrine. Note, so many people took *prasada*; if each had paid a four-anna piece or even a two-anna piece it would have amounted to a thousand rupees. This money the Sannyasins would have spent on consecrated food and again would have come back to devotees. How much of it would have been eaten by the few Sannyasins? Most of it would have been ploughed back to the devotees, to be sure. It is for this reason Master used to say "One must pay something when one visits a holy place". A peasant, one day, asked for a smoke of the Master and had it. When he took leave and went a few steps it was found that there was a pice left on the spot the man was sitting. When his attention was drawn to this he humbly said, "Sir, I have purposely left it there. Here so many *sādhus* and other people come and many are fed free. This pice, this humble contribution of mine, may be utilized for the purpose. Should I take a smoke here free and would not contribute anything to the noble cause?" Just see there are such people also in our country. At Brindavana I have seen that men of the locality as well as those from Punjab used to keep aside one or two *chapatis* from those prepared for their own use and take them to places where *sādhus* lived. *Sādhus* used to take these *chapatis* and devote their time to meditation, *japa* and other spiritual practices. Swamiji once said with regret, "People of this part of the country (i.e. Bengalis) come only to talk and make *sādhus* talk. They never think that *sādhus* also need food to talk to them. This never strikes these people. They have lost all faith in *sādhus* and gods and goddesses". Outwardly they show great respect for *sādhus*; but they are not prepared to sacrifice anything for them. They build small temples and dedicate them to some gods or goddesses. But that is to save money. They will not have to pay taxes to Government. Is it a matter of joke to install gods or goddesses in temples? If *sādhus* and the poor do not get food and other necessaries what purpose does it serve to establish temples? Love and charity are most important factors of service to the Lord. When these are lacking it is no Divine service at all.'

One day Śaśadhar Ganguli, a teacher of Maldah, came and asked Lātu Maharaj, 'Is Ātman an object of knowledge? Can it be known?' Lātu Maharaj: 'An object is a thing which cannot be known without the help of another. But Ātman is self-revealing. It is for this reason we cannot call Ātman an *object* of knowledge.'

The teacher: 'Then why do we want to know Ātman?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Because it is our very being.'

The teacher: 'If Ātman is our very nature how can we be bereft of it?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'That is impossible, how can one be devoid of one's nature. If it is something other than our being, say a possession of ours, then that thing can be taken out of us, we can be dispossessed of it. But one's nature cannot be separated from one. But nature can be covered up by some dirt; and this dirt can cover it in such a way that it may *appear* as something else. But it cannot really change the nature — appearance is not necessarily the reality.'

(To be continued)

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HOLY MOTHER—THE UNIQUE EXAMPLE OF THE MYSTIC AND THE DIVINE

TARA CHERIAN

It is a great privilege to be associated with the celebration to mark the birth anniversary of Holy Mother Shri Sarada Devi. We have great men saints and equally great women saints hailing from different parts of the world and setting an example by precept and practice for their fellow beings to find their way to God. But most of them, either by choice or by circumstances have ploughed a lonely furrow. Their struggles were their own. Their disappointments and their trials were unique to themselves. They could not share much with others, however close they were to other friends and comrades. But in the case of Shri Ramakrishna and Shri Sarada Devi we have an example of two exalted beings continuing their journey in spiritual adventure and the quest of God hand-in-hand and sharing each other's ecstasies and difficulties. To the world outside their relationship was that of husband and wife. To themselves they were spiritual pilgrims who saw in each other the indwelling presence of God and who treated each other as the manifestation of the divine principle which they looked upon as the Divine Mother. It is this partnership, this shared spiritual ecstasy and this vision which they could see in each other of the one in many, which made Shri Ramakrishna and Shri Sarada Devi unique examples in the human experience of the mystic and the divine. We may count ourselves fortunate that this phenomenon occured and worked itself out in the Indian ethos and against the Indian background. In one sense, we may be too near to the lives of these great beings ; in another they have already become part of our unique tradition and helped shape the aspirations of thousands in India and elsewhere.

We call Shri Sarada Devi as the Holy Mother. A mother she was in the real sense of the term to the many disciples who had gathered around Shri Ramakrishna when he was alive and looked up to her with equal devotion when the Master had passed away. She had scaled all the spiritual heights, yet never once did she abandon the routine duties that went with the position of the lady of the household. She attended personally to the needs of the Master. She was equally eager in doing all she could for the disciples. In fact we have a story that at one point in her life when she was depressed, she was worried that she had no son who would look after her. Shri Ramakrishna divined what was crossing her mind and told her straightaway that all his disciples were her sons. These were his words, 'Well, do you want a son ? I have given you so many jewels of sons. And in course of time, you will hear many more people addressing you as mother.' This again is part of our tradition : that a disciple ranks as high as the son, if not more.

The human spirit, when it soars to meet the divine, is not influenced by sex or colour. It was Meera who once said that before God we all are women. Time and again, great beings have chosen to dwell in this land and guide our footsteps towards realization of God. To that galaxy belongs the name of the Holy Mother, Sarada Devi. It may not be possible for every one of us to rise to such heights but such shining examples are there to inspire us and to indicate what the human spirit is capable of.

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"KNOW THYSELF"

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

HUNDREDS and thousands of years have rolled on since a great voice arose on the heights of the Himalayas declaring that profound truth: 'Know Thyself'. In the beautiful forest retreats of that mountain of wisdom the Rishis, or Seers of truth of ancient India, meditated and meditated for ages upon ages, and at last discovered the most profound truth — that man must know his Self. Those ancient scientists experimented and applied their powers of logic, reasoning and argument, deduction and induction, and so on. Finding all of these inadequate in their search for the knowledge of the Self, they turned their attention within. They began to probe within themselves, instead of outside. At last their deep meditations, their inner search, gave them the answer. They discovered the basic Truth — the knowledge of the Self. And they discovered the most profound of all truths, that in order to understand anything rightly, man must know his own Self. The solution of all our problems, the answers to all our doubts, the panacea for all the anxieties, miseries, dangers and difficulties that stare man in the face, at every step of his life, can be found only if man knows *who* he is. The historical account of this greatest of all discoveries has been merged in the mists of hoary antiquity, for it goes back far beyond all recorded history. From time immemorial it has been handed down from generation to generation, from age to age, and I am glad to be able to say that it is still preserved on the soil of India.

That same old voice of wisdom was heard, pondered over and accepted in different parts of the globe. I am not sure whether it was that same voice which arose on the sublime heights of the Himalayas that found its reverberation in the ancient pyramids of Egypt. Historians and archaeologists are discussing even today how this truth was engraved on stone in ancient Egypt, indicating the importance and the esteem in which it was held by ancient Egyptian thinkers. It appears that the Egyptians had cultivated the art, the science, of knowing one's own Self, and that they believed in many of the Hindu doctrines. There are many evidences of the close connection between India and Egypt in ancient times.[1] However, the details of their approach to the knowledge of the Self have been lost in the long history of that ancient country. We do not know what technique was applied in Egypt to teach people how to realize the Self, but there is no doubt that at one time such a Truth formed the basic principle of life in that ancient land. And making that truth the basis of their existence they achieved a wonderful civilization. I will have occasion to point out later on how this one truth can be studied from many different angles; how art and science can be cultivated, and a great civilization can come into being, by the realization of this one Truth — Know Thyself.

Then, following the thread of history, we come to the glorious days of ancient Greece. Even today, in the ruins of their ancient temples, you will find the inscription, 'Man, Know Thyself'. Furthermore, if you study the works of wisdom left for us by the thinkers that ancient Greece produced, you will find that this truth about the Self runs like a silken thread through all the philosophy, literature, poetry, which have been left us as a legacy by those ancient sages. Ancient Greece produced great thinkers, and it is my conviction that she could do so just because she expressed that inner spiritual truth, that man must know himself before he could be successful in extending his activities into the field of expression.

[1] Recent archaeological discoveries and excavations in Bengal (at Pandu Rajar Dhibi) reveal the fact that there was intercourse between India and Egypt and the Aegean Sea countries, as early as the 2nd millennium B.C. if not earlier.—*Ed.*

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Perhaps you will not agree with me. Perhaps you will say that the study of the inner being makes man too introspective, too 'other worldly', to be able to express himself well in the field of activity. I would ask you not to be too hasty about it. Ponder over it. Unless you know your own Self, unless you know the source, the dynamo of your power, I doubt very much if you would be able to achieve anything worthwhile. Behind the achievements of ancient Greece lies this realization, the dynamo of real strength and power. And Greece expended a good deal of energy to attain that knowledge of the Self. A Pythagoras, a Plato, and an Aristotle were possible because that trend of thought was already established in that ancient land. It has been historically recorded that Pythagoras himself went to India, where he studied with the Brahmins.[2]

However, it is a fact of history that nations as well as individuals, cannot always retain the main current of their lives. Another current flows in and alters the main course. Something like that happened in ancient Greece. A time came when that country became more interested in, and occupied with, politics, with expansion and conquest, and gradually that main current of the nation's life was altered. But there is one race of people, one country which has maintained this main current of life, this fundamental outlook on life's success, through all the vicissitudes (and there have been many through which she had to pass) of her national life — I speak of India. No doubt India was the first to discover this truth of the Self. Age after age, period after period, India produced seers and great spiritual scientists who made experiment after experiment on this truth. As a result, India developed a systematic philosophy, a definite method, an art I might say, for the achievement of this goal. And let me remind you again that it is nothing but the simple truth of *knowing your own Self!*

The philosophy of Vedanta, which you have been studying, deals with nothing but this one truth, that you must know your own Self. What conception do you have regarding yourself? What do you think you are? Think about it, and when you have finished with your speculations I shall ask you, 'Have you been able to reach a definite conclusion?' The Vedanta philosophy teaches a definite technique for the realization of that real Self of yours. Those of you who have been attending these lectures know that I have been emphasizing one thing, over and over again — that you must know yourself. Perhaps you are tired of hearing it; perhaps you think that you do know yourself. You may think: 'Why, who could there be who does not know his own self?' Yes, even a baby or a demented person has a certain conception of himself. One would not be able to think or act or talk, unless he had some idea regarding his own self. That is why this truth is so profound. We all have a certain conception regarding our self. It is nothing to be implanted in our system. It is already there. Our real Self is at the back of all that we are, all that we know, yet we are not aware of it. We have disturbed our self-consciousness, and as a result of that disfiguration we think that we are mortal beings, that we will die some day, that we have to suffer, become diseased, and so on. The reason for such an erroneous conception is our lack of understanding of the nature of our real Self.

It is our estimate of the ego, *what I am,* that generates power in us, and that power becomes the ruling, the guiding force of our life's activities. As soon as you conceive yourself with a definite 'I am' consciousness, you generate power. This is true in every field of life. For instance, if you are a student of music you have to unfold the consciousness from within that you are a musician. For that reason you have to practise. There is no other reason for practising. By practice you bring out, you unfold, gradually the consciousness that you are a musician. When that is fully generated you become a musician. It is not by cramming a little technique that you become an artist. Unless your consciousness

[2] According to the historian Apuleius, Pythagoras (582-507 B.C.) came to India where he was instructed by the Brahmins (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. IV, pp. 209-10).

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is awakened all your efforts and your practices will be in vain. You may ask : but there have been child prodigies in the field of music, for instance. How is that explained ? They were born with that self-consciousness. That is how they could execute mature musical compositions at the age of four, or so. The majority, however, have to practise, sometimes for many years, to unfold that consciousness. Try to teach a small child something, say, table manners. He will do it one day, forget it the next, and so on. He shows the complete results of the training only when it enters into his ego-consciousness, when it becomes a part of himself and when he does not have to think about it, but feels it spontaneously. When he has known himself as the performer, the doer, of this etiquette, the full results of the training are seen. We cannot be anything unless we have unfolded it from within ourselves. We must know ourselves to *be* that.

However, I should warn you against one thing. When you have realized yourself in one form of expression do not think you have exhausted the source of expression. For instance, if you have been successful in expressing yourself in the field of music, art, business, or even military skill, do not accept that as the limit of your ability for self-expression. It is impossible to exhaust your real Self. It has immense potentiality and that is manifested from the grossest to the most subtle. If now, at the present moment, you are successful in business, or as an artist, or at holding a political office of power, if you think that you have certain powers that you can demonstrate in a particular field, know that you have advanced towards the realization of your Self along only *one* avenue of expression. Do not think that you have exhausted the possibilities of your Self-expression. Go farther, ahead. You will discover the power behind all your expressions of power. You will discover God.

I have often related a story which was told by Sri Ramakrishna about a poor wood-cutter, and how he was told by a holy man to 'Go forward', to advance farther and farther, and not to stop. The wood-cutter followed the instructions, the story goes, and each time he penetrated deeper into the forest he discovered greater wealth : a forest of sandal-wood, a silver mine, a gold mine, a diamond mine. And then, when he still did not rest satisfied with his achievements, but went deeper and deeper into the forest, he came upon the same holy man, who said, 'Now that you have gone through all those achievements you have come to the stage where I will teach you to realize your real Self'. So, we discover our real Self, the power, the dynamo, behind our apparent small selves, if we go on advancing, knowing that our accomplishments, no matter how great they may seem to be, cannot exhaust the potentialities of our Self-expression.

At present you may consider your self to be very insignificant, and when you compare your idealistic conception of the perfection of the real Self with your own state you naturally recognize the vast difference. You may say : 'I have an idea, a conception, of that divine Perfection, but in me I see only my shortcomings'. But each one of us, no matter what stage he is occupying now in the field of manifestation of that Power, has the potentiality of attaining divine Power and Perfection. That is a great message. Suppose that you do not have the opportunity of making further experiments or of accomplishing greater perfection in the various fields of expression, but this one truth has been sent deep into your system. It has been accepted by you, that within you lies the potentiality of divine Perfection. Suppose you are convinced of that just now. Can you imagine what a difference it would make in your life ? Can you imagine what it would mean to you ? All of your present activities would take on a different meaning. No matter what you might be engaged in you would be a different person.

So we can start from where we are just now. We do not have to take a leap and a jump in order to begin our journey towards that citadel of Perfection. That one conviction is enough for a beginning. However, it must become your self-consciousness. Do not think that what I am talking about has anything to do with self-hypnotism or auto-sugges-

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tion, or any such thing. It is much more profound than that baby's play. However, if you just sit on the side-lines and keep on repeating old fears and criticisms, prejudices and excuses, you may still be sitting there twenty lives from now. Come out into the arena. Make your experiments, and find out what this real Self of yours is. You vaunt your scientific outlook and approach towards so many things ; why not be scientific about your approach to this matter ? Experiment is the basis of progress in the scientific field, yet when will you take up this experiment in the spiritual field in right earnest ?

It is not that this truth, that the source of Divinity is within you, is anything foreign to you. It was so eloquently and poetically said by Christ that, 'The kingdom of heaven is within you'. What is meant by that ? It is not just a fabulous garden full of sweet music and the fragrance of flowers. It means divine Perfection. When there is no handicap to your expression, no obstruction to your knowledge, no impediment to your existence or enjoyment ; when you are absolutely free, omnipotent and omniscient — that stage of your being is designated by the expression, 'kingdom of heaven'. And it is within you. This ancient truth was accepted and taught by Christ, yet how many Christians have paid any attention to it ? Those few who did, became the great Christian mystics. The Vedic seers repeated that truth over and over again : The real Self within you is perfect and immortal ; that blissful Self within you is everlasting, the abode of peace and the highest heaven. These are no platitudes. They are not just intellectual speculation either. The intellect may assist us to reach a certain conviction, but the next step is realization. That realization has been achieved by many sages throughout the long history of mankind, and they have sounded the clarion call that every one of us may attain that crowning success of life's efforts, by knowing the kingdom of the real Self within.

Now let us, for a moment, turn our attention upon ourselves as we are just now. What conception do we have right now regarding the expression, 'I am' ? What items are involved in it ? Let us try to analyse. Well, in the first place, we think of our physical self. We say that I am a man or a woman ; I weigh so many pounds ; I am so many feet tall ; I am blond or brunette, and so on. These are certain items. We should consider them, not exclude them, for they form a part of our self-consciousness. But what is the value of such items ? Are they unchangeable ? No, they are most changeable ; they are open to the influences of time, space and causation. So it seems that this account of the self is not very dependable. It is not stable ; it is always in a state of change. Is our 'I', our identity, then just a constantly changing factor ? That conception, the physical, is all right up to a point, but it does not constitute the whole, or even the most important part, of your being. So, start a different account of your self.

Go deeper in your analysis and consider all the items that make up the intellectual, the emotional, the inspirational parts of your being. These are the finer assets. If you seriously consider it you will readily understand that these items are of more value than the purely physical assets. Why is that so ? Why is it better to have fine accomplishments than to have a fine looking body ? Because they are of a more permanent nature. Time does not readily wear out such assets. They are more abiding than your physical assets. So, from the consideration of the physical aspect of ourselves we try to dive deeper into the subtler and finer plane of our self-consciousness. If you tell me that you do not believe in mysticism, that you are a materialist out and out, and deal only with matter, I shall not be able to agree with you. You are dealing every day with items of your nature which are much finer and more subtle than your material assets. You need not ignore the material aspect, but you should give the right evaluation to it. When you have been able to assess the value of the material items of your nature, you will have greater appreciation for the finer aspects of your being.

Then there is a still deeper layer of yourself, a much finer region than your mind, than your intellect and such other

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subtle qualities of your nature. There is the spiritual plane of your being; and let me add that when you discover that spiritual field, that highest perfection of your being, you do not exclude anything. There is a common fear that when people enter into the spiritual realm, other things are completely ignored. I know people who have a phobia about it. But spirituality fulfils. To know your self is to know everything about yourself. If you know only the physical and intellectual phases of yourself and do not know the innermost, the spiritual, your knowledge of physiology, psychology and the rest, will be imperfect. Unless you have started from the centre, your real Self, which is your spiritual self, your so-called laws of anatomy, physiology, psychology, and other studies of the nature of the human being, will only be working hypotheses.

In recent years a good deal of research has been done by scholars regarding the constitution and expression of the mind, the psyche. The knowledge gained from the study of psychology should not contradict our knowledge of anatomy, of physiology, but with our new discoveries we should be able to add to and revise the previous knowledge. Likewise, the discoveries we make in the spiritual plane will only nourish the knowledge we already have of the body and the psyche. Each new truth we learn helps us to revise what we previously knew. It is growing from a partial to a fuller knowledge of the self. The appeal has always been: Man, know your Self. It is not stipulated that it means only the physical or the psychic self. The Self includes all the ingredients which make up a man.

Allow me to make a digression. When I was considering the title of this lecture I thought I would like to divide the word, Thyself, into two words: Thy Self, for that is exactly what I mean. We always say, myself, yourself, himself, and so on. I wish we would not consider this self of ours as just a pronoun! Is this self just a word? If not in writing, at least in thought let us break it into two words: my self, your self, and so on. And always capitalise the word, Self. That will be a constant reminder as to the real meaning of the word. Unless we get out of the conventional way of thinking about that pronoun, Self, it becomes very difficult to reach a correct understanding of the true nature of our being. I appeal to you: Be a pathfinder, a pioneer, in a new branch of knowledge — the study of that greatly misunderstood pronoun, Self. Get out of the static way of thinking about it. Shake off old doubts and misconceptions. Free your mind from the monotonous repetition of old habits. We have to have a new perspective on our Self, on life. We have allowed our Self to become so involved in the misconception that we cannot think or see clearly. Swami Vivekananda very beautifully put it when he said that our life is like a current of rushing water which falls into a small hollow. It forms a little whirlpool and it whirls round and round, crying out: 'My father, my mother, my name, my fame, Oh!' And then it is swept out of the hollow by the rush of more water, out into the stream again. Let us not be caught anymore in this whirlpool of ignorance regarding the Self. Make up your mind that in this very life you will attain the knowledge of your real Self. Do not be satisfied with less.

Today everyone is talking about war; they are frightened about the possibility of another war. Not to speak of war, and all that it entails, there are so many other problems that make our lives miserable and fill us with fear. Although it may sound revolutionary, and even exaggerated at first thought, I maintain that all our problems could be solved if we progressed farther along the path of knowing our own Self. Communities would be different; and do not forget that communities and nations, in fact all humanity, are only a collection of individuals. If you and I, individually, do not establish certain truths in our lives we cannot expect the Golden Age to come. That has been the trouble all along. We are all expecting the millennium to drop down from the skies, without any effort on our part. But before a new Age begins it must be in the process of becoming for a long time. Can you expect a change in the thought-currents of humanity unless it comes through you

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and me, individually? (Otherwise, we would not be able to recognize it.) The only way to establish a new Age, a better era, a greater civilization, is to establish it individually, within each one of us. Let us contribute our share from the light of our understanding of our own Self. Know that to be Divine; know it to be a potential God. Know your Self to be immortal, to be capable of expressing God's perfection. It is to be pondered over, meditated upon. Let us try to convince ourselves of this truth and then proceed step by step to realize it, to manifest it more and more in our lives — to live it, think it, and act it in every phase of our lives. And remember, nothing in life will be mutilated; it will be fulfilled.

So allow me to conclude by saying that I am going to sing that one song over and over again, approaching it from different angles. If you ask me to express in one word what the aim and object of our endeavour is, I shall say that it is to know the Truth individually, the Truth which is contained within our own Self. We shall *be* it. And radiating that Truth in and through all of our activities, we may help others to realize their divinity also. In the words of Swami Vivekananda: BE AND MAKE! Let that be our motto. We shall bring into manifestation the 'kingdom of heaven' which is within us. 'You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free'. We shall be gods (and that is no blasphemy). We, the Self within each one of us, are Divine. Our Self is not a conglomeration of molecules, atoms, or other fine particles. We are not made of the stuff of mortality. We are immortal; we are God incarnate. That Truth we shall know, and by knowing it we shall be free. That freedom is the kingdom of heaven, and that kingdom of heaven will be expressed through every thought, actions and expression of ours.

In closing, let me remind you that there is nothing new to be said about this Truth. It is thousands of years old, and it is as true today as when it was first discovered. It is not some mythology from out of the mist of the ancient past either. It has been experimented upon by experts. Few people have paid any attention to it. Those few who did have made their lives immortal. Think of it. And it is not something that we have to acquire. It is not something foreign and strange. It is natural to everyone of us; it is within each one of us. We are the inheritors of this Truth. Let us regulate our lives accordingly. Let us make up our minds that now, from the present moment, we will regulate our activities, our thoughts and expressions in such a way as to give due importance to this fundamental Truth, and live our lives according to the light we have received regarding it. That is wisdom. That is the path to immortality, the path to infinite peace and perfection.

I invite you from the very bottom of my heart and soul to join us in this quest, this great quest — to *know* the Self, and to *be* It.

Generally, all knowledge is divided into two classes, the Apara, secular, and the Para, spiritual. One pertains to perishable things, and the other to the realm of the spirit. There is, no doubt, a great difference between these two classes of knowledge and the way to the attainment of the one may be entirely different from the way to the attainment of the other. . . . But, in reality, all this difference is only one of degree and not of kind. It is not that secular and spiritual knowledge are two opposite and contradictory things; but they are the same knowledge in its different stages of gradual development. This one infinite knowledge we call secular when it is in its lower process of manifestation, and spiritual when it reaches the corresponding higher phase.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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ETERNAL GUIDING STAR : THE RAMAYANA

K. SESHADRI

SRIMAD RAMAYANA the great epic of India is of eternal value and universal significance. Its relevance is not restricted to any particular people or period of time. It is 'a contemporary of all times', and it has a message for all humanity, even as the Upaniṣads have. It is a stream of that perennial philosophy, whose waters flow into all territories and irrigate all tracts of land. To the devout Hindu the *Ramayana* is as authentic as the Veda or the Upaniṣad. Indeed, as the familiar *Dhyāna Sloka* declares :

> *Veda Vedye Pare Pumsi Jāte Daśarathātmaje*
> *Vedaḥ Prācetasād-āseet sākṣād Rāmāyaṇātmanā*

'When the Supreme Being, the Paramapurusha, who signifies the substance of all Vedic wisdom, chose to incarnate himself as Sri Rama, son of Daśaratha, the Vedas on their part emerged in the shape of *Ramayana* from the inspired genius of Valmiki, son of Pracetas.' The abstract, esoteric truths enshrined in the Vedic lore are presented in a vivid and popularly intelligible form in the epics. The eternal is expressed through the temporal in terms of concrete situations and characters. The Infinite limits itself as the finite. The secret of the Supreme's incarnation lies in that His embodiment in human form is by the fiat of His will, a free act of His own choice, an expression of His grace for the enlightenment of man and redemption of the suffering. It is not the result of any past *karma*. He is neither bound by *karma* nor deluded by Māyā. He is the wielder of all Māyā and the liquidator of all *karma*. Yet, in the state of His "descent" or "avatara" He subjects Himself voluntarily to the rule and law of the temporal realm in order to teach and correct erring humanity by example more than by precept.

The rich appeal of the epic, *Ramayana*, is evident at all levels. It fascinates the child by the forthright simplicity and imaginative charm of its narrative. It delights the poet by the aesthetic excellence of its creative quality. It is profoundly satisfying to the philosopher-mystic and the spiritual seeker, providing them intimations of Truth through forms of Beauty, and enjoyment of Beauty through experience of Truth.

The learned may wrangle over the letter and the spirit of the text, raising a cloud of controversy through a diversity of interpretations involving a variety of issues — "Was Rama justified in doing this ?" — "Did Sita deserve that ?" — "Was not Vibhishana after all selfish and disloyal ?" — and so on and so on. But the man of devotion is rooted firmly in the faith that the wisdom and benevolence of the Supreme is far superior to all that human ingenuity could defend or deny.

Every school boy knows the story of *Ramayana* almost by heart, at least in outline. He knows, too, that the main characters in the story exemplify certain ideals and represent certain qualities, — some of them as positive examples to follow, like Rama the ideal son, and Hanuman, the ideal devotee, and others to eschew, like Ravana the embodiment of arrogance and lust and Kumbhakarna the personification of sloth and gluttony.

The *Ramayana* may be described as a practical guide book for casuistical reference, for it presents a solution to every "case of conscience". It portrays "moral situations", and suggests a way of dealing with each of them without deviating from the path of Dharma. One such situation presented itself to Lakshmana, when Sita hearing the counterfeit cry for help from the dying Marica insisted on his leaving her immediately and rushing to Rama's rescue, unmindful of the risk involved in her

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being left alone, although Lakshmana repeatedly protested that there was no danger to Rama anywhere and that the cry was a dissimulation designed to bring about the isolation of Sita. Was Lakshmana to go or not? If he went, he would be acting contrary to Rama's specific instructions not to leave Sita alone risking her safety. If he did not, he would be causing deep anguish in Sita's heart subjecting himself at the same time to her unjust accusations. But he had to go, and what followed describes the penalty which Sita had to pay for disregarding the words of Lakshmana. Lakshmana's words in the context represented the words of warning inspired by a preceptor's insight into the nature of the consequences that would inevitably follow on the thoughtless act of a deluded soul. Sita's rejection of these words amounted to disobedience to the preceptor.

It is on these lines that one should proceed, if one would discover the deeper levels of the perennial philosophy in the *Ramayana*. The isolation of Sita and her abduction by Ravana symbolises the separation of the soul from the over-Soul, brought about by the lure of the senses and the soul's thirst for the sense objects. Sita yields to the superficial glitter of the golden deer. When she lost hold of a proper sense of values through delusion and lack of judgment, her desire for a fleeting, chimerical object grew into an infatuation, which was responsible for all her subsequent woes. The *Ramayana* teaches that Sita in captivity in the City of Lanka under Ravana's cruel care reflects the Jivatma's life in *samsara*. Lanka was the seat of material prosperity reflecting the temporary triumph of the Asuras over the Devas, the triumph of the 'Rajas' and the 'Tamas' over 'Sattvaguna'. Ravana tried every art of cunning and cajolery to win Sita, but failed because Sita was firm in her resolve and unwavering in her devotion to her Lord. She refused to yield to all the threats and all the importunities of Ravana, thus exemplifying the attitude of a devoted soul, disillusioned and longing for reunion with the Over-Soul. A whole sea separated Lanka, where Sita was captive, from Rama on the mainland; in other words a wide chasm yawns between the sorrow-ridden vortex of *samsara* and the state of perfect bliss characterizing the kingdom of heaven. Hanuman was the messenger of Rama, who carried the good tidings across the sea, and served as the herald of hope to Sita, who was pining to the point of death. He gave her the assurance that before long Sita would be reunited with Rama who was making every preparation to destroy Ravana and all his brood, and take Sita back to Ayodhya, the City of perpetual peace and unchallenged victory.

Hanuman's role is that of the Ācārya. The Ācārya has indeed a vital role to play in the liberation of man through a recovery of faith and a restoration of the sense of values for the disciple. The Ācārya brings about the happy re-union of man and God. He teaches both by precept and by example. He must be one of superior wisdom, pure in heart, clear in thought and speech, austere in his ways, steadfast in his devotion to God and learned in the Scriptures. Hanuman was all these and much more. He was not only an ideal Ācārya but an ideal Bhakta, an ideal servant of God and an ideal man of affairs. In him we see the perfection of both Bhakti and Jñāna, the fruition of these in a supreme sense of dedication. Having surrendered himself heart and soul to Sri Rama he knew of no other God and would turn to none else. "*Bhāva nānyatra gacchatu*" — "Let my mind and heart remain undeflected from Thee" was his only prayer to the Lord.

Like Hanuman there are other shining examples of devotion and dedication, which the *Ramayana* holds forth for aspirants to follow. All these are illumined souls, one-pointed and unwavering in their Bhakti, firm in their Vairagya, unreserved in their surrender to the Supreme, utterly selfless in their service. Yet there is a distinctive quality in each, rare and unexcelled; for who can excel Bharata in the severe austerity of his *Vairagya*? Who can excel Śatrughna in the self-effacing loyalty of his *Pāratantrya*? Who can excel Lakshmana in the unremitting vigil of his *Kainkarya*?

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Each is a limit in the line. Kainkarya, Pāratantrya and Vairagya — these constitute the pith and substance of Prapatti or self-surrender. There are several lessons that one may learn from the *Ramayana*. But the most outstanding of them all is the twin lesson of Bhakti and Prapatti, of devotion and surrender to the Supreme. These two are really inseparable in essence. Devotion is incomplete without self-surrender, and surrender is empty without devotion. Both devotion and surrender spring from an inward illumination, which provides the urge for service or *kainkarya*. Kainkarya is unselfish, consecrated service, not for personal advantage or small satisfaction. It arises from a deep sense of *belonging* to the Supreme, which is Pāratantrya. Prapatti or Śaraṇāgati, is not just a formal act, which gets completed with the observance of a ritual or convention. It is a constant awareness of the inner presence of the Supreme as the soul of one's soul, the one Svāmin, to whom all things belong as His Svat. '*Rājyaṁca, ahaṁca Rāmasya*', said Bharata, when Kaikeyi offered him the kingdom, which she had so assiduously and at such great price earned for him. 'I belong as much to Rama as the kingdom of Ayodhya does. Why should I *rule* Ayodhya? Ayodhya may as well rule *me*' — was Bharata's magnificent response. What a profound sense of *belonging*! How deep rooted a sense of Pāratantrya! This is the central message of the great epic: Man must awaken to a superior sense of *belonging* to the Supreme and only to the Supreme. He must cease to belong to any other.

THE HOLY MOTHER, AS A HOUSEWIFE'S IDEAL

MALATI KERALA VARMA

WHO knew, when towards the middle of the last century, a little girl was born in a remote, obscure village of Bengal, that she would one day, even in her own lifetime, be worshipped as a veritable goddess and that later on her words of wisdom would serve as a healing balm to the aching hearts of millions of men and women of all times and places? Her advent was one of the most compassionate acts of the Divine Mother of the Universe. The very fact that she came and lived in our midst as a woman is itself a matter of great privilege for womankind. Much of her conversations and talks had been directed to them and naturally they appeal more to women than men.

The Holy Mother has shown to women of all types, how to lead an ideal life. For she herself was a combination of a wife, mother and nun, all rolled into one. She has simplified the great Upaniṣadic truths and high philosophical doctrines by living upto them and has thereby demonstrated that every one can, in a smaller or greater measure, aspire to practise them in his or her life. It is a well-known fact that she had absolutely no education judged by the modern standards, but she still continues to administer through her teachings and advices, practical wisdom and knowledge to many a modern educated girl, who is eager to learn.

We all know how as a wife she earned the goodwill and reverence of her husband who was by no means an ordinary mortal. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna very often used to praise her for her purity and selflessness. A sense of dedication to the work that you do is, according to her, the most important thing in life. To her no work was mean or low. Cleaning the place where a Muslim dacoit had taken his food was to her no low act at all, and this happened even in those days when all around her were very orthodox and uncompromising in their habits, but the Mother was very much ahead of her time.

When once a woman of her household wanted to take bath in cold water late at night in winter, as she had touched a dog (touch-

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ing a dog is considered impure by the orthodox high class Hindus even now) the Holy Mother vehemently opposed it saying that sprinkling some holy water of the Ganges on her body was quite sufficient. When she found the woman still unyielding, she suggested another alternative and that was to touch her! This shows that the Holy Mother was not only divine but that she was conscious of her divinity.

In her days (in villages) girls seldom went to school as that was considered not modest. Moreover, the parents considered it a waste to educate their daughters since their ultimate place was in the kitchen. But the Holy Mother strongly recommended to many parents to send their girls to schools because they could themselves become wiser and serve better by imparting their wisdom to others. Though herself uneducated, she was shrewd enough to realize the harm that could come to those without education.

The Mother acted as a housewife with such perfection that it is worth noticing her ways of doing things. In household economy she was the last word and this is something which every modern housewife should necessarily learn. A small incident in her life shows how much she disliked wasting even petty things. One day someone brought her a basket of vegetables which she sent to the kitchen. After the vegetables were used up she found that the basket was thrown on the roadside. Immediately she called a lady of her household and asked her to pick it up, wash it and keep it to collect the peelings of vegetables. This small purpose of keeping vegetable peelings could be served by the basket. Moreover, those peelings were the food for the cow and she too should be given her share!

The Mother's sense of keeping the house in perfect order is illustrated by another such small incident. Once a girl was sweeping the courtyard of the house one morning. After it was swept, she threw the broomstick aside and went away. On witnessing this the Mother called her back and asked her to keep the broomstick in the proper place, in one corner of the back verandah. 'One should not trifle with a thing though it may be very insignificant. Will you not again need the broomstick? Even such a thing should be handled with care and respect. The broomstick is a thing which is essential to keep the house clean,' she said.

The Holy Mother was very insistent that women should have control over their emotion and speech. Women, she says, are very sensitive by nature. A mere word upsets them. And words are so cheap nowadays. Many unpleasant situations arise in life and women have to bear the brunt very often. It is their lot to bear all calamities silently. They cannot expect everything to be smooth in their households. The greatness of a woman lies in how calmly she faces a misfortune. It goes without saying that the Mother herself was a living illustration of this fact. She had, right through her life, troubles and difficulties with her own family members. But she never lost her temper or complained about her miseries. On the other hand, she considered such things as a blessing as they always kept her mind on the lower plane, otherwise it would have obeyed its natural tendency of, always, soaring high into the spiritual realms. It is said that when one day she had troubles from five different members of her family, all at the same moment, she jokingly remarked to an onlooker "Do you see this? I am performing Pancha Tapa!"

The Mother used to say that the only ornament of a woman was her modesty. To a young woman who once went to see her bedecked with ornaments and flowers and dressed in costly costumes, she said, 'The flower feels itself most blessed when it is offered at the feet of the divine image. Otherwise it is better for it to wither away on the tree. It pains me very much to see a dandy making a bouquet of such flowers and putting it to his nose saying, "Ah! What a nice smell!" Perhaps the next moment he drops it on the floor carelessly and even tramples it under his shoes'.

Rude words as she says, make one's character rude. Nobody gains anything by speaking harshly to others. The Mother very often

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used to quote Sri Ramakrishna's words in this matter, 'Try to avoid speaking an unpleasant truth unless absolutely necessary. One should not even ask a lame person how he became lame'.

To a young lady who was going to her husband's joint family she said, 'Don't be inquisitive about others. Try to keep your mind to yourself'. What a wonderful advice! If only everyone cares to bear this in mind and keeps quiet when he sees others behaving as it pleases them! But actually the majority of people are more concerned about others' problems than their own. To cure this unhealthy tendency Mother has given a remedy and that is 'Do not be without work even for a moment'. She believed that an idle man's brain was a devil's workshop. In fact there were days when she had to work round the clock. She could easily have entrusted much of her daily work to those who were younger than her. She dressed vegetables, husked paddy and cooked various dishes. When anyone wanted to take her to task for the overwork that she did, she would say, 'what to do? I have to do even more to set an example to others. If I do this much, these girls around me cannot help doing at least a little. Let them not remain idle'.

The Mother made no distinction between work and worship. Once a lady disciple asked her how to do the worship of Sri Ramakrishna. Her reply was, 'You have your household duties to attend to. You will not be able to do worship. Pray to the Master. He will do everything for you. He is your own, as the moon is the uncle moon of all children'. But that does not mean that she never recommended worship to any one. In fact she herself did elaborate worship of the Master daily. What she meant was that a busy housewife need spend only a limited time in worship proper and that she should perform all her other duties, regarding them as acts of worship.

The Mother's words were always encouraging. She had some consolation to offer to everyone however depressed that person might be. One day a disciple approached her saying, 'Mother, many evil thoughts like hatred, jealousy etc. arise in my mind. I try to suppress them but still they come up. What shall I do?' The Mother's reply was sympathetic and at the same time encouraging. 'Do not worry, my child. It is only natural. But, mind you, do not give expression to such evil thoughts either by words or deeds. In Kali Yuga mental sin is no sin at all. At the same time pray to the Master to wipe off that tendency from your mind. Nothing is impossible if you earnestly pray.'

In this way she has given us enough and more of such precious clues through her talks and actions so that we can live happily and peacefully in whichever station of life we might be. It is our misfortune if we fail to hear her call and make ourselves her worthy children by trying to live as she has advised us. Her greatest advice to humanity at large is so well-known. But since truth never gets stale it is worth mentioning once again. 'If you want peace of mind, do not find fault with others. Rather try to see your own faults. No one is a stranger, my child. The whole world is your own.' If only all of us try to practise this in our daily routine at least in some small measure, the world can be much better in no time. As for the Mother, she literally believed the whole world as her own. One incident reveals this trait of hers. Once during the 'Durga Puja, she asked a disciple to purchase some cloth for the children of her brothers. He purchased only cloth of Indian make, but the women of the family did not approve of it and made suggestions as to what they wanted. The disciple, out of patriotic feeling, replied in an excited voice, "But what you want are all foreign cloth. How can I buy them?" The Holy Mother was present there. She said with a smile, "My child, they (the Western people) too are my children. I must accommodate everyone. Can I ever be exclusive? Buy the things they want".'

Blessed is this holy land where this great soul was born! Blessed are we to whom she has left this great legacy! Let us prove ourselves worthy of our great Mother who came only for the sake of redeeming us!

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PHILOSOPHY OF SRI MADHVACHARYA

K. B. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

OF the Indian systems of Vedanta, Sri Madhvāchārya's *Vishnu-sarvottamadharma,* is a development presenting a systematic pattern, a theistic-cum-dualistic-cum-realistic view of Indian speculation. Indian or Hindu sources of philosophy are so fertile that from time to time eminent thinkers have appeared to elucidate different aspects of the original thought. Tradition is unanimous in saying that even the latest development of Indian philosophy is only a reiteration of the original thought, that to think of an altogether novel system within its frame-work is almost heresy. It is a challenge to the omniscient mind of the original thinker or thinkers, and quite in tune with this, sometimes the source of the original thought is freed from all human associations and is traced to the omniscient God Himself. This is quite alien to the Western philosophic method, whose philosophic tradition indicates a dialectic of thought based on no original scripture, but rooted in the human curiosity seeking to establish philosophic systems, which are themselves points in the dialectic process with infinite possibilities of philosophic development. Without enquiring whether the Indian attitude of recognising an omniscient, all-complete source of thought (such as the Vedic Śruti with the supplementary texts of the *Gītā* and the Brahma-Sūtras) is philosophic in spirit, we shall rest content with knowing the prominent features of the philosophy of Śri Madhvāchārya, whose system is popularly known as Dvaita, in contradistinction to Advaita of Śri Śankarāchārya.

The main principles of Madhva's system are expressed in the famous couplet attributed to Śri Vyāsathirtha : 'Hari is the Supreme Being ; the world is real ; difference is true ; the Jīvas are dependent on Hari ; there is among them a hierarchy of superiority and inferiority ; Moksha is the condition where the soul enjoys innate bliss ; the means to Moksha is faultless Bhakti ; the ways of knowing are perception, inference and verbal testimony ; Hari is knowable only through the Veda '.

This is a neat summary of a very elaborate and logical system of the Āchārya, worked out by him in about 37 works, as enumerated by Padmanābhasūra in his *Madhva-Siddhānta-sāra.* Understood in western philosophic terminology, (1) the Realism of Madhva consists in recognizing the external world as real, and not as unreal or illusory or sublatable. It has an existence of its own irrespective of a perceiving mind. (2) The Dualism or Pluralism consists in the five-fold difference conceived of between God and soul, soul and soul, God and Matter, soul and Matter, and one material thing and another. Such difference is eternal, that is, it exists not only empirically or phenomenally but also in the transcendental condition of Liberation (*Mokṣa*) or of Dissolution (*Laya*). Further, dualism lies in the fact that while God alone is self-dependent or *Swatantra,* the others are dependent or *Aswatantra.* (3) The Theism consists in the personalistic conception of the Supreme God, Vishnu, who is faultless, full of excellent qualities, of infinite knowledge, bliss, power and compassion. He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer, is immanent as the inner controller in everything, and transcendent, not being exhausted by the universe.

If the philosophy of Madhva can be gathered under these generalities, certain postulates, techniques of method and conclusions appear to be prominent and peculiar to the system, which may be understood now. We shall endeavour to grasp only the broad meanings of some of the specific points.

POSTULATES

The most important postulate is epistemological, and concerns the acceptance of the Vedic *Śruti* as the unquestionable faultless,

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eternal and impersonal (*apaurusheya*) authority of knowledge. Though the other schools of Indian philosophy accept the Vedic *pramāṇa* — and so they claim to be orthodox— Madhva's treatment of the Vedic *Śruti* is unique. He delivers it from all human attachment, and raises it to the highest level of spirituality. For him, Vedas are not imaginary creations of human poets, nor are they products of rational investigations of thinkers, but are the eternal verities to which God conforms Himself. They are the plans according to which He creates and sustains everything. Veda is the language of Brahman, is the way in which the knowledge of Brahman is expressed, and exists because Brahman exists. And so, is the indispensable modicum of expressing the fullness of Brahman, without affecting or modifying Brahman. Veda is not only self-complete (i.e. all-comprehensive), but also is self-established (*svatah pramāṇa*), and eternal (*nitya*). Epistemologically speaking, Veda is the means of '*yathārtha-jñāna*' of the Absolute.

Whereas the other schools of Indian Philosophy occasionally make concessions regarding the Vedic testimony, and treat it on a par with the other *pramānas* of *pratyaksha* and *anumāna,* Madhvāchārya distinguishes Vedic *pramāṇa* as the most superior, and ultimate or sole resort for the knowledge of God.

Such a source of '*yāthārtha-jñāna*' teaches that '*bhedha*' or 'difference' is the soul of existence, that Vishnu is *Sarvottama,* and is the sole purport or '*Mahā Tātparya*' of all the scriptures, that all others (including the *Kshara* and *Akshara,* i.e. the Jīvas and the *Cit-Prakṛti*) are dependent on God, who is different and self-dependent (*Swatantra*), a fact, which implies that He is *Pūrṇa* (Complete), *Sarva-dosha-Varjita* (Faultless), *Guṇa-sarvasvamūrti* (embodiment of all auspicious qualities), and *Jananamrityuvarjita* (transcending birth and death), that is, *Nitya* or Eternal.

He is not only the purport of all philosophy or *Jnāna,* but is the sole Object of devotion or *Bhakti,* and is the sole Actor or Activator or *Kartā* behind all action.

Technique

The philosophic technique which is employed, and which guarantees the philosophic truth of 'difference' as the basis of reality, is the recognition of '*viśeṣa*', the unique feature of the philosophy of Madhva.

Our common experience in this world, based on perception, will amply demonstrate differences between individual things, whether they belong to the animate or inanimate realm. In fact it is a pluralism of reals, which is the basic truth of our experience.

This difference is also cognized at the thought-level. As thinking involves an object of thinking, both must be different. Any validity of our thought should consist in its correspondence with an outside reality, involving a relationship between the knower and the known as different species. As it is said: right knowledge (*yathārtha-jñāna*) is the apprehension of an object as it is. Thus two entities are involved in a concrete thought, and both must be real.

Now then, amidst the innumerable different realms of the world, if we are to speak of some in class-terms as 'men', 'pots', 'cows' etc., thereby implying a unity or universality amongst reals, it is wrong to do so, because, the unity or universality is not an identity of quality, but only a similarity of quality. Similarity or resemblance cannot be identity. At the heart of each being there exists a certain special, specific particularity called '*viśeṣa*', which makes each different from another and makes it possible for us to think and speak of difference amongst the most similar of objects. The implication of this category of *viśeṣa* is that difference among individuals is not an assumption, but is the thing itself. It is the very essence or the '*svarūpa*' of the thing. This is evident in a case which points ordinarily to an identity of a substance and its quality, such as that of a coin and its weight. Are they one, or are they different? They are, so to say, inseparable and impress us as identical, but still we speak of them as though they are different: the coin *and* its weight, or the weight *of* the coin. What enables us to do so

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is the special category called *viśeṣa*, which, however, does not require another *viśeṣa* to differentiate it. Such *viśeṣas* may be innumerable with each thing, and we can never think of a real without its *viśeṣa*. That is, everything is '*saviśeṣa*'. It is on this ground that even the highest Principle, God, cannot be described as '*nirviśeṣa*'. It is this category called '*viśeṣa*', which is the logical clue to the Philosophy of Difference propounded by Madhva, which enables him to establish a pluralism of reals, and a dualism between any two reals. All conclusions of his philosophy are deductions from this principle.

Conclusions

The general pattern of Madhva's philosophy is only a deductive consequence of the ontological (or epistemological?) premise called *viśeṣa*, and may be expressed as follows: (*a*) that the Advaitic theory of the sole reality of Brahman, and the unreality of the world-phenomenon is wrong, (*b*) that the identity or oneness of the *Jīva* and *Īśvara* is wrong, (*c*) that in the condition of *Mokṣa* the Individual soul or *Jīva* merges into or with the *Paramātman* or *Brahman* is wrong, (*d*) that among the liberated souls there is no difference is wrong, and (*e*) that all are eligible to *Mokṣa* is wrong.

Positively speaking, (1) the world-phenomenon is as real as the *Paramātman*, but the only difference being that the former is dependent on the latter. The latter is self-dependent. (2) The individual soul is different from the *Paramātman*: while the former is *aṇu* or atomic, the latter *Vibhu*, all-pervasive. And the former is dependent on the latter for all action, thought and even liberation. (3) If the *Jīva* or the individual soul attains '*swarūpa-jñāna*' and consequently *Mokṣa*, it is not absorbed into Brahman, thus losing its individuality, but retains an existence-apart, its individuality. (4) Each soul is different hierarchically depending on its intrinsic worth to enjoy the bliss. (5) Lastly, depending on their '*svarūpa*' individuals are '*sātvika*' or '*rājasika*' or '*tāmasika*', and these qualities being ingrained in their very nature, some of them are eligible for emancipation (*mukti-yogya*), some confined eternally to migration from one life to another (*nitya-samsārins*) and some eternally confined to hell (*nitya-nārakis*), respectively.

Consistent with the philosophy of Difference, and of the *Sarvottamatva* of God, Madhva formulates the theory of *sādhana* which consists of the knowledge of God as the Supreme Being, of the utter dependence of man on God, of supplementing such a knowledge with intense love or *Bhakti* towards the Lord, to secure His grace, which is the ultimate redeeming element in the *sādhana* towards attaining liberation.

A critical evaluation of such a system is beyond the scope of the present paper. However, before concluding we may pause to enquire of a controversy, which has lately assumed such a significant proportion as to lead to a schism and a consequent bitterness amongst the followers of Madhva's philosophy. It is not gratifying to any āchārya to encounter a difference of opinion regarding the basic or central scheme of his own teaching. I mean, of late, the argument is being put forth that the revered Āchārya has propounded Monism or Advaita of Brahman, and that the principle of 'difference' is only incidental to establishing the perfection or *Pūrṇatva* of Brahman, as against the general understanding of the system as propounding a radical pluralistic realism. No wonder the appellation '*Advaita*' or 'Monism' with its characteristic associations with Śankara's thought, should have caused much concern in the minds of the traditional or orthodox followers of Madhva. For instance one of the protagonists of the former view, Dr. H. N. Rāghavendrāchārya says: "Apart from Brahman, the truth of all, Madhva has nothing else in view. It is a mistake to think that he appeared to save the reality of the world against *Māyāvāda*, the position of Śankara. To have interest in the reality of the world for its own sake is rather the attitude of the Cārvāka. Madhva really wanted to save the conception of Brahman against the *Māyāvāda* itself. This incidentally

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required the establishment of the reality of the world . . ." ". . . Madhva insists on seeing that there is after all only one truth, viz. Brahman". "Madhva has, in his exposition of Brahma-mīmāmsa brought the monism expounded by the Vedas and the Upaniṣads to its culmination."[1] The learned Doctor has been insisting on this theme through several of his writings, whereas another scholar of eminence, Dr Nagaraja Sharma is inclined to describe Madhva's system as a Radical Realism and Pluralism.[2] Perhaps a settlement of this controversy is not possible as long as there is no compromise or understanding *on the stresses laid by* Śri Madhvāchārya himself on the various aspects of his philosophic analysis. The Āchārya himself seems to have laid stress on some significant points. Thus, for example, in his *Vishṇutattva-vinirṇaya* he says: "Advaita is from the standpoint of *paramārtha*. There is Advaita in respect of highest Reality. He alone is the supreme Reality over all. Otherwise the statement, 'He is non-dual of all forms of being', would be useless. When it is said that of all forms of being, he alone has non-duality, it only signifies that he has no equal and superior. All the other forms of being have both equals and superiors."[3] Prof. M. Hiriyanna, in his characteristic academic spirit, thinks that the character of difference of the five-fold-form does not prevent Madhva from conceiving a teleological unity of reality as against numerical difference, a fact which is the basis for his explaining the Upaniṣadic statements of monistic import like 'All this indeed is Brahman' (*Sarvam khalvidam brahma*).[4] It is worthwhile to exercise our thought on this problem of discriminating the main thesis of the Āchārya from the incidental steps and methods of technique, which lead to the final conclusion.

[1] See Madhva's *Brahma-mīmāmsa*; Dr. H. N. Rāghavendrāchārya: *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. III, 1953. pp. 317, 326 & 331.

[2] *Reign of Realism in Indian Philosophy*: Dr. Nāgarāja Sharma, 1937.

[3] *Śrimad Vishṇu-tattva-vinirṇaya* of Śri Madhvāchārya. Tr. by S. S. Rāghavāchār. pp. 71-72.

[4] *Essentials of Indian Philosophy*: M. Hiriyanna. p. 190; Allen & Unwin.

THE CHAMAKAM

T. R. RAJAGOPALA IYER

Its Place in the Vedas

The Chamakam occurs in the 4th Kāṇḍa 7th Prapāṭaka of the Yajur Veda. In the six prior Prapāṭakas, rites depending upon *pariśecana* had been dealt with; in the seventh, the pouring of clarified butter into the sacred fire with a wooden ladle made of *Oudhumbari* wood, what is called by the technical name of *Vasordhāra* is stated. For the purposes of this rite the entire Chamaka is one; the splitting it up into 11 Anuvākas is, as its commentator Sayāna explains, for the use of the 11 Anuvākas as 11 Mantras in non-sacrificial rites. A long string of desiderata are prayed for in it — 347 to be precise — by the votary, coupled with the article "*Ca*" (and), the verb "*Kalpatām*" occurring almost at the end of the tenth Anuvāka, as for example "*Vājaśca mè Kalpatām*" — "Let food be granted or furnished unto me" which if put into the active form with the understood subject, will run as "Let God grant me the following things".

Prayer difficult

Man does not know how to pray to the Supreme Being for the simple reason that he is ignorant of what is ultimately good or bad for him. This is illustrated by the fact that very many of the wicked beings mentioned in

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the Vedas, the Itihasas and Puranas, though they performed penances and austerities which the gods themselves did not undergo, asked for the wrong boons which brought ruin upon them in the end; most of them could have become gods or would have become immortal with a fraction of their efforts if wisely directed. A story in the *Kaushītaki Upaniṣad* exemplifies the contrary. Pratardhana, a mortal king, helped Indra, the king of the gods, to fight the Asuras. Indra was pleased and asked him to choose a boon. Now the human king was wise and he pondered and said "I am a mortal and my knowledge of what is good or bad for me is limited and clouded, but thou art a god; choose thou for me that which will be most beneficial to man". And Indra praised him and taught him the Prāṇa Vidyā, the knowledge of the Self, which leads to liberation. Hence it is that all religions teach men how to pray and what to pray for. The Rudram and Chamakam (which are always coupled) are some of the foremost examples in the art of prayer; the latter especially is one of the most comprehensive, musical, and popular prayer in the Vedas.

The Fourfold Votaries and the Four Purushartas

What sort of votary does the Chamakam contemplate and what does it pray for? Verses 16 to 19 of the seventh Adhyāya of the *Gītā* classify votaries into four groups: "Men of evil deeds, fools, basest of men, do not pray unto Me, for they are of an *āṣuric* nature, full of egotism, their knowledge clouded over by Māyā. Four virtuous kinds of men pray unto Me, Oh Arjuna (1) the afflicted, (2) seekers after knowledge, (3) seekers of Artha or wealth and pleasures of the earth and heaven, (4) and the Jñāni or the wise one. Of these four the last, the Jñāni always intent on Me, and loving Me alone, stands foremost. For, I am exceedingly dear unto him and he unto Me. No doubt all these four are great and highminded, but the wise man is verily Myself". The first three classes of persons are '*sakāmas*', persons with desire; the fourth alone is '*niṣkāmī*', or serves God without desire. The first and third steps lead to the second, the desire to know the self or God, which in turn leads finally to the fourth, worship of God with utter love and knowledge. The Rudram and Chamakam are mainly intended for the first three classes; their avowed goal is to lead these three groups to the fourth, the highest form of divine worship. For examples of pure *niṣkāma* prayer one has to resort to other portions of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the *Bhāgavatam*, *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, and the Tamil hymns of the Aḷwars and the Nāyanars. These sublimated prayers are not by their very nature meant for the majority. We are all men of the world and we would naturally like to have the best of both the worlds as the Rudram states. Aware of this, the Chamakam takes you by the hand and says, "Now, look you! You do not really know what to ask and how to ask; I shall do it for you. If there is anything left over, you may add to my list". One is struck dumb after hearing the Chamakam, almost ashamed. Left to oneself, one's wildest imaginings would not have traversed over so wide a compass. All the good things of the earth are there. For what purpose? Not for the things themselves or the pleasures they afford; these are by no means slighted; you are asked to drink deep the cup of earthly enjoyment. "But do not stop there; do not start and end a materialist", says the Chamakam; 'better than the pleasures of this world are those of the Svarga or heaven, of the gods. With these transient goods of the world you can perform sacrifices unto the gods and reach their abodes. Hence extend your prayer thus: "Let me get this thing and that, but let it be '*yajñena kalpatāṁ*', let me get them along with the several sacrifices, so as to serve in them." Thereby you can rise in the scale of beings, from a man develop into a god. Go a step further still. Understand the secret of sacrifice, the sublimation of *Kārmic* sacrifice into Jñānic, the sort of sacrifice that the Creator Himself is performing with regard to His creation. You will attain Mokṣa or final release and dwell in eternal happiness'.

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Should One Pray?

Before dealing with the question of happiness some casuistical questions arise and call for answers. Should one pray for the base material things of the world, instead of asking for the *summum bonum* of life at once? Should we pray at all? Does not God know our wants and desires? Should He not and would He not satisfy them? The Chamakam answers in the language of the Bible "Ask and it shall be given". God is there to give. Ask regally, not in an abashed, whining and puling manner. Ask abundantly, not for one or two, now and then, and apologetically, but for all things and in a full-throated manner. He is bound to give as Lord and Creator, and He will grant all the desires of His creatures. There is also no distinction between the things of this world and the next. The earthly things are so much His and not to be despised. Ask for one and all. Besides, has not Krishna Himself categorically stated in the *Gītā* (7. 11) "I am even desire in all beings, not opposed to Dharma or righteousness"? Hence virtuous desire itself is a form of manifestation of God.

Ānanda Meemāmsa

What is happiness, asks many a jesting Pilate, and many an Omar Khayam has sung that no such thing exists or at least that it cannot be attained by human beings. A symposium in the West sometime back elicited widely divergent answers. But they are unanimous in this, that happiness is the goal of all men, that it should be ensured if possible. All religions and philosophies have tried to define it and pointed out their several ways of securing it. Two Upaniṣads, the *Taittiriya* in its Brahmānanda Valli 8th Anuvāka and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* in its fourth Adhyāya, third Brāhmaṇa, 33rd Kāṇḍa, take up this Ānanda Meemāmsa, — the investigation of happiness. Taking human happiness as the lowest in the rung, they ascend to that of the semi-human — divine — Manushya-Gandharvas and the successive higher and higher gods in the scale of beings, and end with that of Prajapati or the Creator; but since all this is on the material and outward plane, there is bound to be and there is difference in the measure of happiness. All these happinesses are but small drops in the ocean of bliss which is Brahmānanda, the happiness of the self, which is attained by the *śrotriya* and *akāmahata*, by the Brahmajñāni or spiritual man who attains knowledge of Brahman or his self, due to his casting off of all desires. Padmapada, a disciple of Śankara, points out that it is not correct to state as if the self is an object possessing Sat Cit and Ānandam, — existence, intelligence and bliss as external qualities, but that they are inherent in the self, that the self is nothing but these attributes. Hence there is no question of attaining any happiness which is extrinsic to us or limited or graded; it is intrinsic, one and entire, and man's birthright; he has only to shed his body-consciousness and realize that he is a soul.

The Acme of Human Happiness

And this is how the Upaniṣads describe the acme of human happiness: "He among men who has got his limbs and other organs in full and perfect order, and has command of all the sources and objects of enjoyment, and is lord and emperor over the entire world and possesses more than all others in the highest degree all human enjoyments, the happiness enjoyed by such a being is the acme of human happiness". Now what are the sources or objects that will conduce in the highest degree to such an ideal of human happiness? The Upaniṣads with their head in the sky do not deign to descend to define them; the answer is furnished completely by another portion of the Vedas, the Chamakam.

Summary of the Chamakam

An analysis of the Chamakam reveals in what a cogent and logical manner it proceeds. The first Anuvāka can be styled the body or physical Anuvāka. It consists of 56 materia. Starting from *Vājaśca*, food as the foundation, it deals with the human body and its consti-

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tuents — the vital airs, the organs of sense and the internal organ, the mind, and prays that all of them may be in a healthy and efficient working condition; and a long life and a comely old age; and finally for *śarīrāṇi,* birth in perfect bodies belonging to beings on the higher scale, — a sound soul, and a sound mind, in a sound body, in short.

The second which can be styled the Extension of Personality Anuvāka consists of 38 objects starting from *Jyeṣṭhyam ca mé, ādhipatyam ca mé,* — eminence and lordship over men. It ends with *matiśca mé,* — good, common and practical sense; and *sumatiśca mé,* — the higher instinct almost amounting to genius described by Wordsworth in his character of the "Happy Warrior", of presense of mind in the midst of overwhelming crises and difficulties, of spiritual patience and fortitude. In between come whatever conduce to name and fame, and success in life, and worldly affluence, money and position and dignity. It is to be noted that '*kreeḍā*' — sports, and *moda* — the exhilaration and pleasure resulting from healthy recreation indoor and outdoor, occur in this, and places of resort and holiday-making with good means of communication to them. What a modern ideal!

36 objects are listed in the 3rd Anuvāka which begins with "*śam ca mé, mayaśca mé*", — worldly and non-worldly welfare, often recurrent in the Rudram; it ends with two beautiful ideas, *sooṣā ca mé, sudinam ca mé* — may this Ushas or dawn rise auspicious unto me; with refreshment after good sleep let me arise to the blowing of conchs, beat of drums, sound of music, and hymns sung loud and feelingly in praise of God, the Creator in His temples all over; after purificatory bath and ablutions, let me also join in the homage and paean which the whole universe offers at the mystic *sandhi*, the twilight; in keeping with the *sooṣās* so well begun, let the whole day prove a *sudinam* — a day with no regrets that it was ill-spent or wasted, but filled with good deeds conducive to the welfare of my soul, and the whole world, and dedicated unto God. This is the most subjective and comprehensive of all the Anuvākas and may be styled the Kāma or Priya Anuvāka, which sets forth the desiderata, the heart's desires in this and the next world; prays for their due fulfilment; for love and goodwill towards the world, and reciprocally that of the world towards him; that the Viśvam or universe should belong to the votary not to be held in fee and bondage by right of conquest and brute force, but by the thaumaturgic touch of love which expands and transmutes all that comes into contact with it; that one should be a veritable Viśva-mitra, a friend and lover of the world, and befriended and beloved in turn by it.

The fourth Anuvāka is the Food and Drink Anuvāka which craves for (ऊर्क्च मे सूनृताच मे पयश्च मे रसश्च मे घृतं च मे मधु च मे) grains that sustain, and kindly hospitality, and drinks and juices; for that subtle alchemy which turns what one eats and drinks into immortal nectar, सग्विश्च मे सपीतिश्च मे partaking of them with others; for successful agricultural operations with rains that favour; for children and relations in whose company alone, one begets Puṣṭi, — a subtle sense of solidity, security, comfort, fullness; for *puṣṭiḥ*, a well-nourished body and not mere gorging and swilling by himself selfishly. Then with that casting of the net wide to include all and omit nothing so characteristic of the Vedas, the Chamakam proceeds in an ascending order of 7 adjectives to ask for (विभु च मे प्रभु च मे बहु च मे भूयश्च मे पूर्णं च मे पूर्णतरं च मेऽक्षितिश्च मे) (1) variety, (2) plenty, (3) recurrence, (4) overflow, (5) fullness, (6) greater fullness, and (7) perpetual non-diminution by replenishment of 13 kinds of cereals, millets and pulses.

The 5th Anuvāka marks off the real bent of the Chamakam by asking for (अश्मा च मे मृत्तिका च मे गिरयश्च मे पर्वताश्च मे सिकताश्च मे वनस्पतयश्च मे हिरण्यं च मेऽयश्च मे) the earth and the treasures on it and inside it, stone, sands, clay, rocks and mountains, trees

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and the metals, and fire and water, and vegetable produce cultivated and wild, animals domestic and wild; for (कर्म च मे शक्तिश्च मेऽर्थश्च मे एमश्च मे इतिश्च मे गतिश्च मे) religious *karmas* or rites and the ability and presence of the requisite qualifications prescribed in the Vedas and wealth and the materials to complete the rites.

The 6th which is the shortest is called the *Ardhendram* in which the names of 20 Vedic gods to whom sacrifices are usually offered, are coupled with that of Indra as *agniśca ma indraśca mé, somaśca ma indraśca mé*. The Brāhmaṇa explains the prominence given to Indra as due to his being king of the gods and hence entitled equally to a share offered unto the several gods and their distinctive honours and enjoyments.

The seventh mentions 29 vessels used in Soma sacrifices. The Brāhmaṇa calls the seventh and eighth as the Yajña Āyudha Anuvākas. For a sacrifice verily consists of the Āyudhas or the instruments by which it is performed and completed. The vessels are Antar Aṅgas, immediate or proximate limbs or appliances by which the sacrifice is directly performed, while those mentioned in the eighth are Bahir Aṅgas or intermediaries. Starting with the Samid or holy sticks put into the fire, the platform for fire, the pestle and mortar and holes in the lātter for mashing and squeezing the Soma creeper, the place reserved for the fire, the apartments of the males and females in the sacrificial shed, it ends with the *Avabhṛta* or ceremonial bath making the completion of the sacrifice, and the Svāhakara or invocation to the gods to come and accept their offerings.

The ninth prays for the main sacrifices including the famous Aśvamedha or horse-sacrifice along with their accompaniments and the four Vedas. The tenth Anuvāka is the great dedicatory prayer. It is easily the most important. It mentions 31 objects. Probably no other country except India, whose economy was agricultural and whose life revolved in Vedic times round a cycle of sacrifices, could have coined such an astonishing number of names for cattle in all stages —

[गर्भाश्च मे वत्साश्च मे त्र्यविश्च मे त्र्यवी च मे दित्यावाट् च मे दित्यौही च मे पञ्चाविश्च मे पञ्चावी च मे त्रिवत्साश्च मे त्रिवत्सा च मे तुर्यवाट् च मे तुर्यौही च मे षष्ठवाट् च मे षष्ठौही च म उक्षा च मे वशा च म ऋषभश्च मे वेहच्च मेऽनड्वाञ्च मे धेनुश्च मे।]—

from that in the embryo to the lordly Ṛṣabha, the bull, which has passed into a figure of speech as Nara Ṛṣabha, 20 different kinds of the bovine species are mentioned. Then follow the vital airs in the body, the eye, ear, mind and speech, almost in the same order as in the first Anuvāka 13 to 22, but with this addition of the verb to the entire string of nouns from the beginning '*yajñena kalpatām,*' — 'Let all the objects so far mentioned prove fit and efficient for their several purposes along with my sacrifices' . . . It closes with the solemn and impressive invocation. '*ātmā yajñena kalpatām, yajño yajñena kalpatām*'. With all due respect to the great commentator Sayana, I would state his meaning is over-cautious and *Kārmic* and rather tame. His meaning is: 'Let my body prove fit and efficient along with my sacrifice. Let the Aśvamedha and other sacrifices I may perform in future prove fit and efficient by the present sacrifice I am performing'. Both the Rudram and Chamakam are admittedly two-faced; they can be used for a strictly *kārmic* purpose or a higher spiritual one; that is why the Rudram is styled as the *Rudropaniṣad*. Curiously enough Sayana gives the meaning of Paramātma or Supersoul to the word Ātma occurring in the first Anuvāka (29) where the meaning of 'body' given by him here would be more appropriate. I would humbly suggest '*ātmā=mama Jeevātmā; yajñena=yajna svarūpeṇa, kalpatām; yajño; yajñena=uttama jñāna yajña svarūpeṇa; kalpatām,*' — let my self or soul be converted into or dedicated as a sacrifice; let my sacrifice turn into a real sacrifice, a *jñāna yajña*, a spiritual sacrifice. The best commentary on

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this is furnished by the fourth Adhyāya of the *Gītā*. Verse 33 says 'Better than the sacrifice conducted with material objects is the *jñāna yajña* or knowledge-sacrifice'. Verses 23 and 24 state 'Of him who is without attachment, liberated, with his mind fixed on spiritual knowledge, performing his duties in a dedicated spirit of sacrifice, his actions get completely destroyed. The dedication is unto Brahman or God; the Havis or sacred offering is Brahman; the sacred fire is Brahman; the sacrificer is none else than Brahman; if one performs his actions with this concentration, whom else will he reach but Brahman in the end?' Such an interpretation would be in keeping with the grand finale of the *Nārāyaṇopaniṣad* where human life is compared to a great sacrifice.

We have now reached the 11th and last Anuvāka which mentions 42 objects. The first 17 are ordinals starting from एका च मे तिस्रश्च मे पञ्च च मे सप्त च मे नव च मे and proceeding to 33; and 18 to 30 are cardinals starting from 4, चतस्रश्च मेऽष्टौ च मे द्वादश च मे and ending with 48. One would be puzzled at this asking for figures. Did not the Brāhmaṇa come to our aid by stating that the ordinals are the favourite metres of the gods and the cardinals are the favourite metres of men? The *Gāyatri* metre of the gods consists of 33 words and the *Jagatī* metre belonging to men consists of 48 words. So any person performing the *homa* with these ordinals and cardinals obtains whatever can be attained by all these divine and human metres. Feeling that it is coming to the end of its rather long catalogue of wishes, the Chamakam with its feet firmly implanted on the earth, and knowing the primary secret longings of man, reverts to the prayer with which it started *vājaśca mé* and reiterates it in 31 — 'May food be granted unto me, and its production'; and since the life not only of men but of all beings depends on the great universal mystery of sowing the seeds, their shooting up, and apparent death by harvesting in winter — a matter for tears and lament — with a resurrection in spring when life revives again from the old dead seeds — a matter for laughter and rejoicing — the nature-myths of almost all the early races of mankind wove it into the legends of the gods and heroes; and Greek mystery-plays and tragedies were born out of it. The Chamakam asks 'not only for the growth of food once but *apijaśca mé* — in never-ending and repeated succession; and for *kṛtuśca mé*, sacrifices which the Hindus firmly believed brought the annual rains steadily and sufficiently; and for *suvaśca mé*, the sun, the cloud-maker, and rain-distributor; and for *mūrdhā ca mé* the head, — the heavens in which the sun and clouds, the sustainers of life below, on earth moved. With a spurt at the end the Chamakam lifts up its hands and prays for nothing less than 'Him who is immanent in this infinite like space and time; who is born after the last of things, and who exists at their end; who is immanent in the earth and is born on it; and who assumes the form of the earth; and who is the Adipathi, the Lord and Ruler Immortal.' व्यश्नियश्च मे आन्त्यायनश्च मे आन्त्यश्च मे भौवनश्च मे भुवनश्च मे अधिपतिश्च मे। This is the *Bhakti Marga*, the method of attaining God by personal devotion and it is no less efficacious than *Jñāna Marga* or the method of knowledge.

Though the presence of knowledge everywhere and in every individual is an eternal truism, yet the path pointed out by the great ones of the earth has the glory peculiar to it, and there is peculiar interest attached to the transmission of knowledge through the succession of teachers and their disciples.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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THE POPULARITY OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

D. L. PATIL

THE popularity of a thing depends to a large extent on certain factors which have an appeal essentially to the emotional life of the people. People usually do not care much about a thing which lacks an emotional element and which is too scientific, too technical, too complex. It is a well-known fact that that which is simple and quite easy to grasp becomes popular. The popularity of the *Rāmāyaṇā* and the *Mahābhārata* is mainly due to their simple narration, lucid style and essentially emotional, moral and religious content. That which captures the imagination of the masses also becomes popular. And that which brings consolation and relief to the suffering people, that which guides the people in their most difficult and confusing moments by suggesting very easy-to-follow solutions has also definitely all the marks of popularity.

The popularity of the *Gītā* within India and outside India is mainly due to the factors which are mentioned above. The first thing which strikes us when we read the *Gītā* is its simplicity of form and style. The eternal moral, philosophical and religious truths contained in the *Bhagavad Gītā* are put in the form of a simple, beautiful and easy-to-grasp language of poetry. Unlike prose, poetry always has an appeal to the masses because of its emotional and imaginative touch or element. The author of the *Gītā* perhaps knew very well that if he put his philosophical, religious and moral truths in the form of a beautiful poem, it would have a wide appeal. In this connection it is also necessary to remember that the *Gītā* forms a portion of the Bhishma-parva of the great epic *Mahābhārata* whose popularity in India is immense.

The most important factor which explains the popularity of the *Gītā* is that it concerns itself with the exposition of the most important problem of life, namely, suffering and the way out of it. The teachings of Buddha are equally popular because of their emphasis on suffering and its remedy. The solutions of the *Gītā* for such sufferings of life as fear, death, poverty, pain, disappointment, humiliation etc., are full devotion to our duties, non-attachment to the fruits of actions, self-control and devotion to God. These solutions of the *Gītā* are not set forth in the form of an obscure and difficult philosophical treatise or book. They are in the form of dialogues between the two most popular heroes of the *Mahābhārata* epic, namely, Krishna and Arjuna. One of the essential teachings of the *Gītā* is *karmayoga*. *Karma* binds us but we cannot live without doing our respective *karma*, duties. What is the solution? The solution does not consist in giving up *karma* but in doing our respective *karma* renouncing its fruits. Attachment to the fruits of *karma* binds us. This essential teaching of the *Gītā* concerns every human being on this earth. Our sufferings are mainly due to our too much concern with the fruits of our actions. And this concern with the fruits of our actions makes us anxious, and fear arises in our hearts whether we would be able to reap the fruits, which makes us often inefficient in the performance of our duties. The *Gītā* says, don't bother yourselves about the fruits of actions, because if you do your karma disinterestedly the fruits will come. Because of this fundamental teaching which has an immediate relevance to our daily life, the *Gītā* has become very popular. This teaching of the *Gītā* appeals both to the common man and the scholar.

Another important factor which accounts for the popularity of the *Gītā* is its spirit of religious toleration and its grand attempt to harmonize all the different tendencies of Hindu philosophy. *Karmayoga*, *Jñānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga*, all find their proper place in the teaching of the *Gītā*. Krishna says that it is

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the ignorant and not the men of wisdom who quarrel about the ways to realization or *mokṣa*. The *Gītā* also tries to reconcile the conflicting tendencies of the systems of Indian Philosophy. But its popularity both at home (India) and abroad is certainly due to its catholicity and religious toleration. Krishna says: 'As do men approach me so do I accept them: men on all sides follow my path alone, O Partha (Arjuna).'

VALUES AND VIRTUES

BR. SUDHANGSHU

A VERY common definition of value is 'effectively charged criteria by which goals of human behaviour are chosen. Values are preferential interests which people hold sacred and inviolable, and for which they sometimes will fight. Values are the core of social institutions and main springs of social behaviour and action. Values vary from region to region and from community to community..'. Social values differ, economic standards vary, but there are certain fundamental notions of values that run as common factors in human life. And for the matter of that, the ultimate values of life are eternal and infinite.

What is virtue then? A direct reply to this may not be very simple. So let us know first, what is not virtue. Replying to this question Chesterton says: 'Virtue is not ethics. It is more than ethics. It is good habit'. Now, perhaps the question will be whether virtues can be taught. Well, it seems with Protagoras, Socrates has a lively time in discussing the issue. But the Socratic method did not arrive at any conclusion there excepting that 'virtue is knowledge'. Of course subsequently Plato developed this theme and reclaimed that 'knowledge is virtue'. Finally, Aristotle reconciled the position in his system by combining both Metaphysics and Ethics.

To be a little more exact let us say virtue is a quality. It is not an object which can be pointed out as independently existing. Some one has said that it is like the smell of the flower, that subsists in the flower itself. Virtue is a part of character; and the manifestation of virtue is always in and through a human personality. It is about this personality, Swami Vivekananda said, 'A part of our energy is used in influencing others. Our bodies, our virtues, our intellect and our spirituality, all these are continuously influencing others, and so conversely we are being influenced by them.....A man comes, you know he is very learned, his language is very beautiful and he speaks to you by the hour — but he does not make any impression. Another man comes and speaks a few words, not well arranged, ungrammatical. . . He makes an immense impression'. The latter is a case of manifestation of virtue.

Further, the foregoing passage also clears the point that virtue is a kind of manifestation that makes a personality altogether different — more effective, more impressive. Virtue therefore is so connected with life — deep is its root. It brings no superficial or outward transformation in the personality but effects a fundamental change, inwardly. It is this that makes virtue communicable. Words or so-called learning cannot be virtue. Virtue is neither a kind of trained artificial behaviour nor book-learning. The great book of virtue is the book of life itself. It is written in the very character and personality of the man. As Swamiji has said: 'Words, even thoughts contribute only one third of the influence in making an impression, the man two thirds.... Coming to the great leaders of mankind, we always find that it was the personality of the man that counted'. The virtues of Buddha were in the personality of Buddha. The personality of Jesus on the cross is a great manifestation of his godly virtues.

Virtue therefore is not an abstract concept

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to be explained as Reality beyond and behind. It is realizable and can be expressed in practice, in life. It is expressible and no longer a 'Knowledge' or metaphysical idea alone. Though it is a real something in our life, it is not an object or a thing outside us. We can achieve it by cultivation — cultivation of virtues help reaching the ultimate goal of life. It is a discipline that speaks about the achievements of life. It is both a means and an end in itself.

The differences between values and virtues are very often theoretically conceived. In the scheme of life they are sometimes synonymous. The values of life are mostly virtues of life. Values and virtues are two reciprocal terms. A pursuit of value means a pursuit of virtue also. The meaning of a comprehensive life includes both of them. Values and virtues are but two main props in the process of life. In an ideal perfection both of them are correlated. For values, when put into practice, are transformed into virtues. The most important thing in this connection is how we strive for values in our life and what we value as values.

It is a fact that according to our investment in life we reap our fruits. About virtues the best that has been said is: 'Virtue is the soul. It gives flavour to the smallest leaves of life'. Emerson further describes, 'Virtue is the adherence in action to the nature of things and nature of things makes it prevalent. It consists in a perpetual substitution of *being* for *seeming* and with sublime propriety God, described as saying "I am"'.

When the Upaniṣad enjoins, '*Dharmam cara*', it means not only to fall in line with the mere outer observance in life, but to stick to supreme values. Similarly have we to interpret the Buddhist code '*Dhammam śaraṇam gacchāmi*'. Here, both the terms 'Dharma' and '*Dhamma*' stand for a comprehensive meaning that combines into a single purpose of life, a harmony of values and virtues. It is the total outlook that covers a wide perspective of life. For indeed, 'One's outlook on life is a part of one's virtue'.

Naturally the problem of value is a philosophical question. Yet it reflects sufficiently a practical aspect of life and here virtue comes in. Virtue is a practice no doubt, but it is no longer a mechanical practice of certain behaviour or habit. The sense of virtue can never be determined by some practice alone. Charity, piety, kindness, humility etc. are no doubt certain examples of virtues, but virtue is not limited thereby in these terms. For these terms are neither norms nor a self-complete standard within themselves. They must have greater meaning beyond them. Mostly we miss this significant point and accept virtue for the sake of virtue in a very limited sense. Beyond the so-called practices of virtues, a deep sense of values must be there, which we fail very often to grip in our common sense approach to life. Thereby we lack a proper integration of the meaning between the values and virtues; the exact sense of life is lost in anarchy and chaos.

Therefore, life must seek the perennial source — the eternal values. And as we said earlier, for this one must cultivate virtues. We must toil with our life and as Thomas Brown says: 'There is no ready way to virtue'. One must struggle and win it. In the *Bhagavad Gītā* we find Sri Krishna did not allow Arjuna to sink himself in utter confusion and weakness. He forced him even to follow the virtues of war than to perish in the name of philosophy, and the so-called values of peace in social life. Pacifism is not a virtue when it comes to a matter of compromises and cowardice. In this sense there is no gap between the values and virtues of life by which we can escape the real and ghastly situations by quoting one or the other. It is one-whole, compact, holy as the Lord Himself. Where is the gap in it excepting in the eyes of a sceptic who does not believe in anything?

Prophets come and they combine both virtues and values in their life. Religion is not only a moral conduct, but a code of life with an eternal purpose. The path of Buddha known as the eight-fold path embodies certain fundamental virtues to be practised such as: right views, right resolve, right speech,

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right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

The 'Sermon on the Mount' can be called a sermon of virtues to be practised by man. The prime virtues that have been suggested there include, humility, justice, forgiveness, chastity, purity, forbearance etc. So is the case with the teachings of other prophets like Zoroaster, Mohammed and Moses. The Ten commandments received by Moses include: 'You shall not murder', 'honour your father and mother', 'You shall not steal', 'You shall not bear false witness', 'You shall not covet anything that is your neighbour's' etc. They all preached the essential values and virtues of life.

Sri Ramakrishna never detailed these virtues in his teachings. According to him the fundamental value of all values is God and the virtue of all virtues is to love God. So he said love God, all other virtues will follow automatically. The more one approaches Divinity the more do one's vices and evils fall off. To Swami Vivekananda, 'Freedom' is the only value of life, and 'service' is the great virtue that can make our lives perfect. But he said the 'service' must be out of pure love. It should be a self-less service. It must have an all-pervasive divine outlook behind it.

Any one of the virtues can be taken up according to one's nature and individual make-up. Only possessing a virtue will not do, as Cicero has said very correctly — 'as if it were an art'; it should be practised. For without cultivation man loses his grip over it. Therefore Dante also urged:

'We are formed to live the life of a brute,
But virtue to pursue the knowledge high.'

About the choice of right virtues St. Francis de Sales says: 'There are some virtues of such general utility that they not only require an exercise themselves apart, but also communicate their qualities to the practice of other virtues. . . . There are other virtues more excellent than these,' — but nevertheless meakness, temperance, modesty and humility are virtues that are most necessary. Then he says, 'Each person ought to practise in a more particular manner those virtues which are required by the state of life to which he is called'.

About virtues not directly connected with our particular duty he said that we should prefer the most excellent than those which are more showy. In this connection he continues: 'There are certain virtues which are greatly esteemed and are always preferred by the general run of men, because they are near at hand, apparent to our senses and so to speak material. . . . Choose then the best virtues, not the most esteemed; the most noble, not the most apparent; those that are actually the best, not those that make the most show'. For, virtues and values are not for showing; they are fundamental — the very texture of our supreme life. Virtue feeds Divinity — the God of religion. Virtue is the fire and the fuel of all the religions everywhere; virtue is life.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

'Pancadaśī', the first page serial, which we have been running for the last three years will be discontinued from the May issue where a few verses of the II Chapter still remaining will be published in an inside page. The Pancadaśī in book-form is expected to be published shortly by the Ramakrishna Math, Madras. We hope to begin a new serial titled 'Paramārthasāra', also a treatise on Advaita, from the next month onwards. Being a shorter

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book we hope to complete it within a year. It is a rare book and translations, if any, are not easily available at present.

'The Holy Mother — The Unique Example of the Mystic and the Divine' is the text of a speech delivered by Mrs. Tara Cherian, wife of the Governor of Bombay, Dr. P. V. Cherian, on the occasion of the Holy Mother's Birthday celebration at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Khar, Bombay, on March 6, 1966.

The article 'Know Thyself' is a lecture given by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder-leader of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, on September 30, 1936, and has been made available to us by his disciple Mrs. Mallika Clare Gupta, now residing at Calcutta.

'Ramayana, the Eternal Guiding Star' by Sri K. Seshadri, M.A., a retired Professor of Philosophy is adopted from a talk given by him over the All India Radio, Madras, and has been published by their kind permission.

Dr. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao, B.A. (Hons.), Ph.D., Principal and Professor of Philosophy, Sri J. C. B. M. College, Sringeri is not a new contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari*. He is the author of the book *Ontology of Advaita*.

Sri T. R. Rajagopala Aiyar, an advocate, from Cauvery Nagar, Trichi Dt. has given us a summary of the 'Chamakam', the purpose it serves and the source from which it has been culled.

Mrs. Malati Kerala Varma is a devotee from Madras.

We welcome Sri D. L. Patil, Lecturer in Philosophy in the Maharaja's College, Mysore, as a new contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari*.

Br. Sudhangshu is of the Ramakrishna Order.

THE YEAR'S END

WITH this issue the *Vedanta Kesari* completes its fifty second year of publication. We take this opportunity to thank all our subscribers, advertisers and contributors for having maintained a sustained interest in the Journal. We owe our thanks also to the printers who have given us active co-operation in bringing out the numbers in time. We hope they will extend this co-operation in the years to come also.

The next issue of the journal though a special number is expected to be posted to the subscribers not later than the first week of May, 1966.

Our appeal to subscribers is that if they have been benefited by reading the journal they would recommend the same to their friends who will be interested. For in spite of the increase in the cost of printing and paper we have not so far enhanced the rates of subscription with the hope that it will maintain itself and for this it is incumbent that the circulation should increase. May we expect some of the readers, at least, to help us in this matter!

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRIMAD BHAGAVATA: Condensed by S. S. Cohen. Pp. 360. Published by Chinmaya Publications Trust, 175, Rasappa Chetty Street, Madras-3. Price : Not mentioned.

The Bhagavata occupies a unique place amongst our Puranas, — Vidya Bhagavata vati — being regarded as the verbal vehicle of the Lord, "Vangmayi Murti". It has been described as "Paramahamsa Samhita" but as the illustrious author of this exquisite compilation, is at pains to point out, it 'rescues too the householder and the common man' from 'the easy descending path of rank materialism', through its 'lavish, kaleidoscopic legends' which are 'mines of wisdom'.

Mr Cohen, modestly enough, styles his treatise as a 'condensation', but to the devout votaries of this great epic, it is apparent that it is more than a mere summary or adaptation. The spirit of the original is visible throughout the book; the stories and anecdotes are retold with minute details: the dissertation of high philosophic import have been spotlighted and featured conspicuously. The moral behind each incident and

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event, has been drawn out convincingly. One can instance in this connection the stories of the wedding of Rukmini (P. 242 and P. 248) and of Kuchela's mission (P. 276-P. 279), which have been most admirably sketched out. To the lay reader, nothing is more helpful than the author's interpretation of some of the difficult passages in the Purana, vide Purusha, Prakriti and Shakti (p. 53) and Jagrat and Sushupti (p. 125). And to the sophisticated, Mr. Cohen throws fresh light on the esoteric import of seemingly cruel things (p. 130 and p. 131), and of the Rasakrida incidents, which are misunderstood even to this day. His gloss on Sanandana's discourse on the nature of Brahman (pp. 288, 289), is meaningful and informative.

Altogether, it is a tale well retold, and the author has done a signal service both to the Purana and to the English speaking world, by presenting it in such a fine form and in a captivating style. "Svadu Svadu Pade Pade" — that was how the Purana itself was described: One is tempted to describe this book as possessing that trait in abundance.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

SMART'S HANDBOOK OF EFFECTIVE WRITING: By Walter K. Smart and Daniel R. Lang. Pub. Jaico Publishing House, Bombay. Pp. 404. Price Rs. 3.

Effective writing in English is essential for success in all vocations. The literature in this field is increasing day by day. This handbook is aimed to be a textbook for under-graduates and a guide for others.

At the outset the authors stress the importance of good writing habits and proceed to explain the need to view the composition as a whole. Then follow the discussions on mechanics of paragraph-construction, sentence-structure, diction, punctuation and spelling. A chapter on grammatical correctness serves as a precise resume and guide on High School English grammar. The book concludes with a chapter on library. A neat index is added at the end of this attractive volume.

This book should prove valuable to all interested in effective writing.

K. NARASIMHAN.

CRITIQUE OF INDIAN REALISM: A Study of the conflict between Nyaya-Vaishesika and the Buddhist Dignaga School. By Prof. Dharmendranath Shastri, M.A., Ph.D., Kurukshetra University, with a foreword by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. Publishers: Agra University 1964. Pp. 562. Price Rs. 35.

Philosophical thought in India has flowed mainly into two divergent channels: (1) the orthodox thought which has its source in Atmavada of the Upanishad and (2) the Buddhist thought which springs from the Anatmavada of the Buddhist scriptures. The latter are regarded as non-orthodox as they are non-Vedic. Buddha himself is regarded as a thorough rationalist and his teachings given an analytical form. Later Buddhism produced some of the great dialecticians of Indian philosophy like Nagarjuna, Dignaga etc. The book under review is a remarkable contribution to Indian philosophy especially in the field of epistemology. Dr Shastri's profound scholarship brings into prominence a lesser known facet of Indian philosophy.

The entire work, the massive volume of about six hundred pages, moves round one single purpose. In the words of the author: 'In these pages, it has been shown that the Buddhist theories of evanescence and causation are just a logical culmination of the basic principles accepted by the Nyaya-Vaishesika. The scholiasts of the latter school fought a desperate battle to defend themselves against the Dignaga school. The present work contains ample evidence to show that the Nyaya-Vaishesika school lost that battle'. As a matter of fact the whole book is a comparative study of the Buddhist and Brahmanic epistemology and philosophy and can be placed by the side of "Buddhist Logic" of Dr. Stcherbatsky.

We are sure that the work will have a permanent place in our philosophical literature.

M. P. PANDIT.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS

Birthday Celebration of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna

The 131st birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna which fell on Tuesday 22, 1966, was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The day began with *Mangalarati* in the shrine followed by devotional songs, Vedic chanting, Puja, Chandipath and Homa. About a thousand devotees were given prasad in hand. In the evening, after Arati in the shrine, there was reading from the life of Sri Ramakrishna after which Swamis Paramatmananda and Satswarupananda spoke for about twenty minutes each.

The public celebration which came off on Sunday, February 27, 1966 was held at the Vivekananda Hall of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore. There was a *Harikatha Kalakshepam* on "Dhruva Charitam" by Brahmasri T. S. Balakrishna Sastrigal at 3-30 p.m.

The public meeting began at 5-40 p.m. Swami Kailasananda welcoming the speakers, president of the meeting and the audience introduced the subject of the day. Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar, M.L.C. who presided over the meeting, with a few introductory remarks requested Sri A. G. Venkatachari Editor, *Dinamani* to speak in Tamil. After the Tamil speech Dr C. T. K. Chari, Professor of Philosophy and Psychology, Madras

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Christian College, who spoke in English, kept the audience spell-bound by his fervent and illuminating address.

Prizes to the school students, who had participated in the inter-school elocution and recitation competitions, were distributed at this stage.

After the distribution of prizes Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar spoke about the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and pointed out how his name has spread throughout the world.

Sri T. V. Visvanatha Aiyar proposed a vote of thanks with which the meeting came to a close.

After the meeting there was bhajan led by Swami Priyananda for about an hour in the Math Hall.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BHUBANESWAR.

Report for the period January 1960 to March 1965

The Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Bhubaneswar has a publication department from where books in Oriya are published. The other activities of the Mission are: (1) A free library; (2) a Charitable Dispensary; (3) an Upper Primary School.

The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda were observed during the year. Regular scriptural classes were conducted in the Math premises as also at several other places.

The important event during the period was the Celebration of the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda. In commemoration of the centenary a statue of Swami Vivekananda has been installed at a prominent place in Bhubaneswar.

During the period under review the complete works of Swami Vivekananda in Oriya, in ten volumes, and some other books were published.

The Vivekananda Free Library has 5,300 books. The Reading Room received 8 dailies and 43 periodicals and magazines. 21,087 books were issued during the period.

The free Upper Primary School had 249 (boys 162 girls 87) pupils on its roll. The M.E. section which was recently added had a total number of 54 pupils. The total number of patients treated at the Dispensary during the period was 1,23,188.

The Management offer their sincere thanks to all donors and subscribers, friends and sympathisers who have helped the institutions in various ways to carry on the activities.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY GIRLS' HIGH SCOOL, MADRAS-1.

AN APPEAL

Th public is aware of the different types of services that Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission have been rendering in the city of Madras and its suburbs for the last 68 years. Recently, during the Centenary year of our patriot-saint Swami Vivekananda in 1963, a Girls' High School was started at 13 and 14, Saravana Mudali Street, near the Mint, Madras-1 to commemorate his hallowed memory. The School is named Swami Vivekananda Centenary Girls' High School which has now 414 girls on its roll. Last year 17 girls appeared for the S.S.L.C. Examination and 14 of them came out successful.

The School is housed mostly in thatched sheds and a small unit of building constructed in 1964. So far, we have spent Rs. 1,64,325.94 (out of which we got only Rs. 28,001 from the Government) on account of the land, building, sheds, furniture and equipment and for creating an endowment of Rs. 35,000 as required under Government rules. As it is very risky to run the School in the sheds which may topple down any time, due to rain and storm, causing injury to the children, we have got plans and estimates ready for 7 class rooms at a cost of Rs. 90,000, out of which the Government has agreed to contribute only Rs. 35,000. The construction has already started.

Since these 7 rooms will not be sufficient to accommodate all the classes we are compelled to have another plan for 10 rooms on the first floor of this proposed building which will require another Rs. 1,35,000 or so. Thus we shall require nearly Rs. 2,00,000 to complete the School building.

I appeal to you in the name of the *poor* school children of the locality to donate your mite so as to enable us to complete the project before long.

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THE VEDANTA KESARI

(English Monthly of the Ramakrishna Order)

The Annual Special Number of the *Vedanta Kesari* (illustrated) will be brought out in the month of May, 1966. Articles from well-known scholars dealing with various subjects will be included in the issue. It will comprise of the following :

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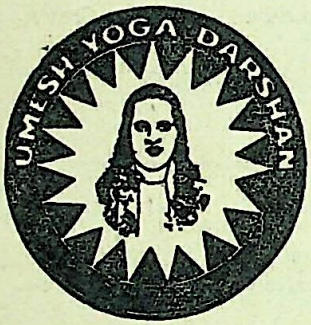

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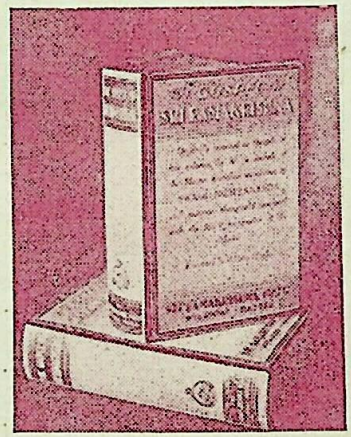

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